

Interview with

Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan

Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of
Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg)
Contra Costa County, California

February 15, 2004



The cover photographs:

Top left, Ruth Buchanan at the Buchanan Ranch

Top right, William J. Buchanan and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan

Bottom left, William J. Buchanan

Bottom right, William J. Buchanan harvesting hay at the Buchanan Ranch

Images Courtesy of the Buchanan Family Collection

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*This publication has been produced by Traci Gibbons
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Interview with
Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan

**Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of
Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg)
Contra Costa County, California**

February 15, 2004

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We Ruth Buchanan
 Interviewee (please print)
 Traci Parent
 and _____
 Interviewer (please print)

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Jack Kenny
 Acting Chief of Interpretation and Recreation, EBRPD

February 15, 2004
 Date

Interviewee's Signature: Ruth Buchanan	<u>Ruth L. Buchanan</u>
Address:	Pittsburg, CA 94565
Telephone: (granddaughter)	Date: Feb. 15, 2004

Interviewer's Signature: Traci Parent	<u>Traci Parent</u>
Address:	Antioch, CA 94509
Telephone:	Date: Feb. 15, 2004

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Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve

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We Laurie (Buchanan) Pease
Interviewee (please print)
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Jack Kenny
Acting Chief of Interpretation and Recreation, EBRPD

February 15, 2004
Date

Interviewee's Signature: Laurie Pease	<i>Laurie Buchanan Pease</i>
Address:	Pittsburg, CA 94565
Telephone:	Date: Feb. 15, 2004

Interviewer's Signature: Traci Parent	<i>Traci Parent</i>
Address:	Antioch, CA 94509
Telephone:	Date: Feb. 15, 2004

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PREFACE

Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan

From the 1860s to the turn of the 20th century, the Mount Diablo Coal Field was the largest coal-producing region in California and once boasted the five thriving communities of Nortonville, Somersville, Stewartville, West Hartley, and Judsonville. With the decline of coal mining due to competition from better quality coal and the discovery of new energy sources, many families were forced to leave the region in search of gainful employment. Some coal field residents, including the Arata, Ginocchio, Lougher, and Thomas families, remained in the region and turned their focus from mining to ranching. Many of the structures in the former towns were dismantled and reused in the nearby Contra Costa County communities of Antioch, Brentwood, Byron, Clayton, Concord, Knightsen, Oakley, and Pittsburg. Some of the buildings were purchased for use by local ranchers or were lost to seasonal fires and scavengers.

From the 1920s to the late 1940s, sand was mined in Nortonville townsite for foundry use at the Columbia Steel Mill in Pittsburg. During the same period of time, high quality silica sand was obtained from the Hazel-Atlas Mine in Somersville townsite by the Hazel-Atlas Glass Company for glassmaking purposes. The sand was transported to the glass plant in Oakland, Alameda County, California.

In 1973, the East Bay Regional Park District began acquiring the former coal and sand mining area. Today, visitors to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, a nearly 8,533 acre park, can explore miles of trails, tour the Hazel-Atlas silica sand mine, and visit historic Rose Hill Cemetery.

The Buchanans Arrive in Contra Costa County

In the 1850s, William Buchanan and his wife, Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan, both natives of Scotland, arrived in the United States. They located in Placer County, California, where William Buchanan followed mining. Their daughter, Jeanette “Jennie” was born in 1863 in Placerville, El Dorado County. In 1866, they arrived in Antioch, Contra Costa County, staying for two years, moving again in 1867 to New York Landing (later called Black Diamond and in 1911 changed to Pittsburg). In September 1867, their second child, William James Buchanan, was born at the family home located at Second Street and Railroad Avenue in New York Landing.

Ties to Nortonville

Located approximately six miles south of New York Landing was the thriving community of Nortonville. At the time that the Buchanans arrived in Contra Costa County, the nearby coal mining communities were at the peak of production, with Nortonville reported as the largest town in Contra Costa County in the 1870s. Various sources state that William Buchanan worked as a coal weigher in Nortonville.

In 1868, the family moved to a ranch four miles southeast of New York Landing. There, William Buchanan took up farming and raised grain. The road that passed in front of their farm would eventually be called Buchanan Road.

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Since no school existed yet in New York Landing, the Buchanan children attended school in the neighboring community of Nortonville, where a school had existed since 1866. A newspaper article from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, March 15, 1945, reported that William J. Buchanan recalled walking four miles each way to and from school in Nortonville. At other times, they rode a pony to school. Once a school was established in New York Landing, the children attended school there. In May 1879, the *Antioch Ledger* newspaper, reported the attendance of “Jennie” and “Willie” Buchanan at the school in New York Landing, listing their names on the “Roll of Honor.”

W. J. Buchanan

Jeanette “Jennie” Buchanan, the oldest child of William and Catherine Buchanan, married Scotland native, James Syme circa 1905. Her brother, William James (a.k.a. W. J., “Bill,” “Billy”), married Nora Carroll in Martinez, Contra Costa County in January 1893. Nora, a native of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, had traveled to New York Landing to assist her sister with her nieces and nephews.

The first child of William J. and Nora, was born in 1894 in Black Diamond (formerly called New York Landing). He was named William C. Buchanan. Just two months and 16 days after birth, baby William died.

William J. worked the farm and raised grain, but Nora preferred working in town. In 1896 they purchased a store on First and York Streets

in Black Diamond. A year later, Nora was appointed Postmistress for the Black Diamond Post Office. On May 10, 1898, their second child, Warren Grant “Bud” Buchanan, was born. Their third and last child, a daughter named Norine, was born in 1900.

William Buchanan, father of W. J. Buchanan, died on March 15, 1904. William’s wife, Catherine, died six years later on January 14, 1910. Their daughter, Jeanette “Jennie” and son-in-law, James Syme, continued to live on the ranch that was homesteaded by Jeanette’s parents.

In 1904, the same year as his father’s death, William J. Buchanan ran for Contra Costa County Supervisor and was elected. He held the office for 47 continuous years. According to the *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper, October 4, 1950, he was “the oldest elected California official in point of both age and service.”

In 1906, having outgrown their first store, William J. and Nora moved their business to First and Black Diamond Streets in Pittsburg. According to the book, *Days Gone By*, Volume 1, by Nilda Rego, published by the Contra Costa County Historical Society, 1987, page 197, Ruth Buchanan remembered the second Buchanan store: “The family had lovely living quarters upstairs. You could look out over the river...They built a little brick building in the back of it, small, 12 by 12, something like that. It was the telephone exchange.”

In 1922, the Buchanan store moved for the final time to a larger location to meet the needs of a growing community. The new store was

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situated on Fifth Street and Railroad Avenue in Pittsburg. The store remained at this location for 26 years until it closed in 1949.

The name of the store has been listed various ways in numerous newspaper accounts: Buchanan Store, Buchanan's store, Buchanan Department store, and Buchanan's Department Store.

The *Polk's Pittsburg and Antioch (California) City Directory, 1931, Vol. One*, page 27, lists the business as Buchanan's Department Store. (See page 60.) Additionally, the sign on front of the store building in the photographs on pages 69 and 71 indicate the name as Buchanan's. For consistency in this document, the name "Buchanan's Department Store" is used.

Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan

Ruth Lorraine Simpson was born in Crockett, Contra Costa County on April 13, 1899. She was the daughter of Edwin and Mamie (Hewitt) Simpson. Her father was a plumber in Crockett. When Ruth was two years old, her paternal grandfather died, and the family moved to Berkeley, Alameda County, where her father managed a coal and fuel company.

The Simpsons had four daughters: Ruth (1899–2004), Edna (1901–1991), Grace (1903–1999), and Margaret (1908–1997). They lived on Parker Street in Berkeley and Ruth remembers the chimneys on the house being shaken down during the 1906 earthquake. Ruth stated that after the earthquake, they

could see the flames across San Francisco Bay from their home. They lived two weeks without heat until the chimney could be rebuilt. Prior to the chimneys being rebuilt, the stove from inside the home was moved to the backyard so that cooking could be done. Since it was April, the weather was fairly good. Ruth's mother baked the cake for her seventh birthday on the stove in the yard.

In 1919, at the age of 20, Ruth traveled to Pittsburg via the Oakland–Antioch Railroad to teach school. She lived in a house on Cumberland Street with six other teachers. Her sister, Edna, eventually joined her in Pittsburg to teach as well. Ruth and Edna roomed together at the Hotel Los Medanos. Her other sister, Grace, also came to Pittsburg and married Pittsburg resident, Edward N. Parent. Edna married Albert N. Becker, whose father was the head of the Columbia Steel works in Pittsburg. Ruth's youngest sister, Margaret, married William B. Kennedy, a chemist at the Columbia Steel works.

Ruth Simpson met Warren "Bud" Buchanan, son of W. J. and Nora Buchanan, in the little brick telephone office building that was located in the back of the Buchanan family store. Ruth remembers Warren sitting on the railing and talking with the telephone operator when they were introduced.

Ruth Lorraine Simpson married Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan on August 2, 1922, at the home of Simpson's parents in Berkeley, California. Ruth was 23 years old at the time of the marriage and Bud was 24. The couple had one child, William E. Buchanan (1929–1996).

According to the *1930 United States Federal Census for Township 6, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County*, Warren “Bud,” age 31, and Ruth, age 30, lived on East Twelfth Street in Pittsburg with their 1 1/2-year-old son, William, and Ruth’s 21-year-old sister, Margaret.

Living on the Buchanan Ranch

Jennie, W. J. Buchanan’s older sister, and her husband, James Syme, who had been living on the family ranch, wanted Bud and Ruth to take over the ranch so that they could move to town. Ruth stated that she didn’t want to move because she had a nice house in town. In 1938, however, Ruth and Bud moved to the family ranch on Buchanan Road.

Census records for 1910–1930 document the years that the Symes had been living on the ranch. By 1940, the census record shows that Jennie and James Syme are living on Black Diamond Street in Pittsburg. Additionally, the 1940 census indicates that Warren G. “Bud” Buchanan, age 42, and his wife, Ruth, age 41, are living on a farm. Bud’s occupation on the census is listed as a grocer in a grocery store.

Ruth stated that renovations had to be made to the original home on the ranch before they could live there. There was no indoor plumbing and no electricity at the time. The home was the birthplace of William J. Buchanan and originally stood at the foot of Railroad Avenue, near Second Street in New York Landing before being moved to the ranch.

While living on the ranch, Bud continued to

manage Buchanan’s Department Store. Ruth and Bud raised sheep on the ranch. They also had cows, horses, and donkeys. Ruth says she used to ride a horse from the ranch to Clayton, a small community at the time, located south of Pittsburg. She stated that they would ride the former Black Diamond Coal Mining Company railroad bed from Pittsburg through Nortonville townsite to get to Clayton. Although Ruth did not recall seeing the remains of any buildings when riding through Nortonville townsite, photographs and other oral history accounts indicate some coal mining structures existed until the mid 1940s. Additionally, new structures were built in Nortonville during the 1920s to 1940s to support the sand mining operation for casting sand for the nearby steel mill.

Although Ruth arrived in the area well over 30 years after Nortonville had lapsed, she recalled stories passed down through the family over the years. Ruth stated that Grandmother Buchanan would take her eggs and produce from the ranch and walk to Nortonville to sell them. At the time of the interview, Ruth still had a lamp that was purchased by Catherine Buchanan at Lasells Store in Nortonville.

Ruth stated that although she was familiar with the other local ranchers, it was only Frank Arata, of the Arata Ranch, that she knew well. Frank Arata would buy grain, horses, cattle, and sheep from them.

During the interview, Ruth Buchanan also discussed the Abrams, the ranching family that lived closest to them. Like the Buchanans, the Abrams had connections to Nortonville.

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The two Abrams boys, Warren and William, attended school there. Other ranching families were also discussed at the time of the interview.

In 1949, the Buchanan Store was sold and Warren “Bud” Buchanan entered the real estate business. He was the owner of Buchanan Insurance and Realty Company. Bud’s mother, Nora, passed away in 1945. His father, W. J. Buchanan, passed away five years later, in 1950. After his father’s death, Bud was appointed by California Governor, Earl Warren, to fill the vacant Contra Costa County Supervisor position of his late father. Bud Buchanan passed away in 1970. Ruth Buchanan continued to live on the ranch until the time of her death in 2004.

A Lifetime Connection to the Coal Field

Since the time the Buchanan family first moved to Contra Costa County in the 1860s, there has always been a connection between them and the Mount Diablo Coal Field. W. J. Buchanan, a former Nortonville school student, and later a Contra Costa County Supervisor, maintained a relationship with many of the former coal field residents. Former Somersville resident, William Mortimore, started working for W. J. Buchanan in the Buchanan store in 1906. Mortimore was employed as a clerk at the store. A newspaper article from the *Pittsburg Independent*, August 15, 1936, titled “40 Consecutive Years in Business Provides Unique Record in City,” states:

We believe that the success and growth of our institution has in a great measure been due to the loyalty of our employees, many of whom have put in years of faithful service, topped by William Mortimore, who came with us in 1906 and has been continuously employed these thirty years.

William Mortimore’s nephew, Edwin Mortimore, who was interviewed in August 2005, also worked at Buchanan’s Department Store. He was employed at the store while attending high school and ran a delivery truck for the store. During the interview, Edwin stated:

My Uncle Bill [William Mortimore] who worked in the mines, the last one out of the mines with the mules, he went to work for W. J. Buchanan sometime after they opened Buchanan’s store on Black Diamond [street] over fifty years. And then, when he [William Mortimore] hurt himself, fell and broke his leg, W. J. Buchanan kept paying him right up until the day he died. Now how many employers do that?

Edwin Mortimore also recalled that Gertrude (Anderson) Young, another former coal field resident, was employed by W. J. Buchanan. According to Mortimore, Young worked in the women’s apparel and yardage department.

W. J. Buchanan maintained his connection with the former coal field residents and descendants throughout his life. When he served as Contra Costa County Supervisor, part of his job was to oversee roadmasters for the county. Leyshon Lougher, and later Leyshon’s son, Elmer “Jack” Lougher, served as roadmasters and were well acquainted

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with Buchanan who would make trips to the Lougher Ranch on Somersville Road.

Former coal field resident reunions were first held in the 1930s. In newspaper accounts, W. J. Buchanan was listed as attending the events and sometimes serving as the chairman for the reunion picnics. When the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West erected a monument in Rose Hill Cemetery in memory of the pioneers of Nortonville and Somersville in October 1934, Buchanan served as master of ceremonies.

An Admired Man

Buchanan was so well admired that in 1946, the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors named the airport in Concord, Buchanan Field, in his honor. Buchanan protested against this act, but lost the vote. The airport name was voted four to one by the supervisors. Buchanan made the one opposing vote.

W. J. Buchanan was a beloved man. At the time of Buchanan's death in 1950, then California governor, Earl Warren, was quoted in the *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper from October 6, 1950, saying: "He was a splendid public servant. He did as much as any man I know to build Contra Costa County to its present very important position in the state."

Purpose of Interview

Ruth Buchanan was interviewed with the purpose of acquiring information regarding the relationships and interactions among the ranchers of the area, many of whom were former coal field residents and their descendants. She was also interviewed to obtain information regarding the Buchanan family and their connection to Nortonville.

Buchanan was 104 years of age at the time the oral history interview was conducted at her home on Buchanan Road in Pittsburg. During the interview, a number of questions to Buchanan had to be repeated due to her loss of hearing. An attempt was made to schedule a follow-up interview with her, but due to her age, it was not possible to schedule another visit.

Generally, following an oral history interview, a photograph is taken of the interviewee to document the event. Buchanan, however, declined to have her picture taken. The image of Ruth Buchanan, below, was used for her 100th birthday program. She celebrated her 100th birthday in April 1999. Ruth Buchanan passed away before this transcript could be completed.

Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan
1899–2004



Acknowledgements

With appreciation to Laurie (Buchanan) Pease, the great-granddaughter of William J. Buchanan and granddaughter of Ruth (Simpson) Buchanan, for reviewing this transcript before printing. Pease was an active participant in the February 2004 interview. Additionally, she provided many of the images used in this transcript.

With gratitude to Rosemarie DiMaggio and Vince Ferrante of the Pittsburg Historical Society for their assistance with providing information and images for this transcript.

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A very special thank you to the Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve staff and volunteers who spent many hours proofreading this transcript before printing.



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INTERVIEWER

Traci Gibbons

Traci Gibbons (formerly known as Traci Parent) began her career with the East Bay Regional Park District in 1977. She was hired as a summer intern at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve to document and compile a list of individuals buried in pioneer Rose Hill Cemetery. In the fall of that year, she was hired as the first Interpretive Student Aide at the preserve to assist in conducting the underground programs at Greathouse Portal in the newly opened section of the silica sand mine.

In 1979 she was hired as a Naturalist at Black Diamond and was eventually promoted to Lead Naturalist and later Supervising Naturalist. Gibbons's duties entailed overseeing the interpretive operations at Black Diamond and the rest of the Northeast Interpretive Sector parks of the East Bay Regional Park District until her retirement in 2012.

She is a life member and past president of the Contra Costa County Historical Society and served as a member of its Board of Directors for almost 20 years.

Gibbons has written two books regarding the former coal mining area: *Images of America, Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve* (published by Arcadia in 2009) and *Rose Hill—A Comprehensive History of a Pioneer Cemetery in the Mount Diablo Coal Field* (published by the East Bay Regional Park District in 2011).

In 2008 Gibbons received the Scholastic/Authorship Award from the Conference of California Historical Societies. In 2013, she was presented the Harriette Merrifield Forbes Award for “outstanding contribution to the field of gravestone studies” by the Association for Gravestone Studies. Both awards were bestowed for her research and documentation of the book regarding Rose Hill Cemetery.

From the late 1970s until her retirement, Traci Gibbons conducted oral history interviews with former Mount Diablo Coal Field residents, their descendants, as well ranchers and former sand miners of the area to capture and document the history of Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve.

During her employment with the East Bay Regional Park District, Gibbons administered the District's oral history program. In addition, she has supervised oral history staff and has conducted training for Park District staff, historical societies, and various other groups on how to conduct oral history interviews.

In retirement Gibbons works as a contractor for the East Bay Regional Park District to compile and complete transcriptions from past oral history interviews regarding the history of Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve.



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Buchanan Family Tree

Father

William Buchanan

b. 1826, Scotland
d. 1904, March 15, Contra Costa Co., CA
m. Catherine Campbell, circa 1859, Rochester, New York

Mother

Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan

b. 1833, Scotland
d. 1910, Jan. 14, Black Diamond, Contra Costa Co., CA

Son of William & Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan

William James "Billy" Buchanan

b. 1867, Sept. 11, New York Landing, Contra Costa Co., CA
d. 1950, Oct. 6, Pittsburg, Contra Costa Co., CA
m. Nora Carroll, 1893, Jan. 4, Martinez, Contra Costa Co., CA

Wife of William James "Billy" Buchanan

Nora (Carroll) Buchanan

b. 1870, Aug. 14, Portland, Multnomah Co., OR
d. 1945, Aug. 2, Pittsburg, Contra Costa Co., CA

Daughter of William & Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan

Jeanette (a.k.a. Janet, "Jenny") Buchanan

b. 1863, July 24, Placerville, El Dorado Co., CA
d. 1950, Oct. 1, Concord, Contra Costa Co., CA
m. James Syme, circa 1905

Husband of Jeanette (a.k.a. Janet, "Jenny") Buchanan

James Syme

b. 1867, Scotland
d. 1942, June 8, Antioch, Contra Costa Co., CA

Son of William J. & Nora (Carroll) Buchanan

William Carroll Buchanan

b. 1894
d. 1894, Dec. 28, Black Diamond, Contra Costa Co., CA

Son of William J. & Nora (Carroll) Buchanan

Warren G. Buchanan

b. 1898, May, Black Diamond, Contra Costa Co., CA
d. 1970, March 28, Pittsburg, Contra Costa Co., CA
m. Ruth Simpson, 1922, Aug. 2, Berkeley, Alameda Co., CA

Children: William E. Buchanan

Wife of Warren G. Buchanan

Ruth L. Simpson

b. April 13, 1899, Crockett, Contra Costa Co., CA
d. Dec. 9, 2004, Contra Costa Co., CA

Daughter of William J. and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan

Norine Buchanan

b. 1900, Oct. 28, Black Diamond, Contra Costa Co., CA
d. 1968, Nov. 10, Oakland, Alameda Co., CA
m. Howard Sadoc Kelley, date unknown

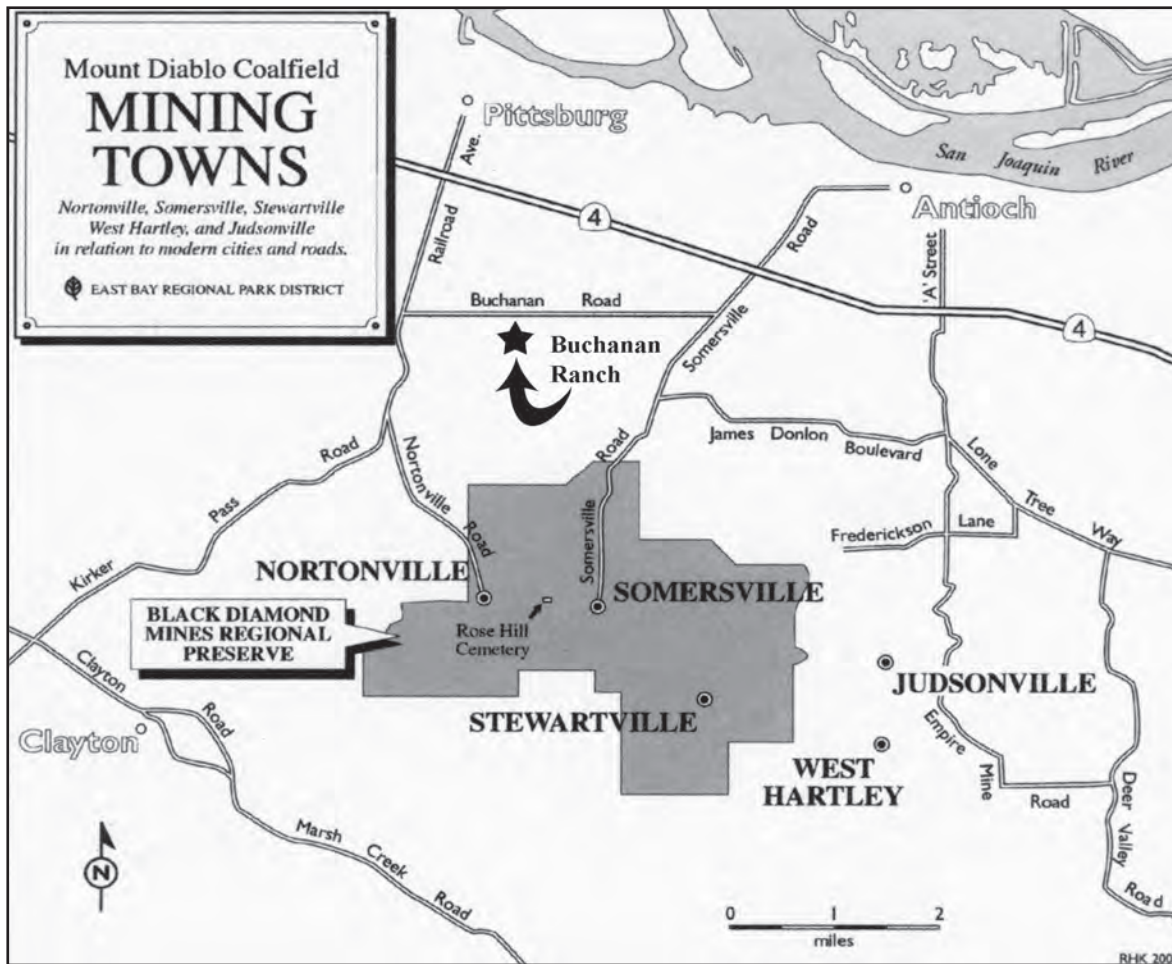
Children: Margaret and Catherine "Cathy" Kelley

Husband of Norine Buchanan

Howard Sadoc Kelley

b. 1897, Oct. 25, Antioch, Contra Costa Co., CA
d. 1944, March 2, Oakland, Alameda Co., CA

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The upper map shows the location of the Mount Diablo Coal Field mining towns in relation to modern cities and roads. The arrow and star mark the location of the Buchanan Ranch. The lower map pinpoints the location of Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, just south of Antioch, Contra Costa County, in the eastern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area. Map compiled by Robert Kanagaki in 1999.

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A GUIDE TO THE INTERVIEW

Designated punctuation marks are used in the transcription. The following definitions denote their significance.

- ... Designates breaks in speech or disunity of thoughts
- Designates interruptions by one speaker to another during the normal course of conversation
- [sic] Designated after a word or phrase to indicate the material was transcribed as intended/recorded by the speaker
- [] Used by the transcriber to clarify or add additional information.
- [...] Used by the transcriber to designate a sentence(s) that could not be understood.
- [?] Used by the transcriber to designate a word that is not understandable.
- (?) Used by the transcriber to designate the questioning of spelling of a word.

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Gibbons: Am I sitting close enough to you?

Buchanan: Yeah. You have to be really close.

Gibbons: OK. Well I'll talk loud and slow—

Buchanan: Into that ear.

[Buchanan is hard of hearing, especially in
one ear.]

Gibbons: And into that ear. OK. So I have
some questions to ask you about the Buchanan
family, the ranch, and I know that you married
into the family that came from Nortonville,
from the coal mining area.

Buchanan: Yes.

Gibbons: Yes. So I would just like to ask you
some questions today. And is it OK that I tape
record you?

Buchanan: If it's OK—

Gibbons: If I tape record you?

Buchanan: Yes.

Gibbons: [Laughs] Reluctantly she says yes.
So I am wondering if you can give me your full
name?

Buchanan: My full name?

Gibbons: Your full name. I know your first
name is Ruth.

Buchanan: Ruth Simpson is my “ex” name—

Gibbons: Your maiden name.

Buchanan: My maiden name. Ruth Lorraine
Simpson is my name I go by now on all the
papers.

Gibbons: Great. And then you married Mr.
Buchanan.

Buchanan: I married a Warren Grant
Buchanan in 1922. I came here [Pittsburg] in
1919 to teach. Oh, this is in all the papers!

[Ruth Simpson married Warren Buchanan
on August 2, 1922. She is reluctant to be
interviewed because she says the information
is already in newspapers. See newspaper
articles regarding her wedding on pages 67
and 68.]

Gibbons: Uh-huh. OK, well maybe I can
skip over some of the questions. You know,
sometimes when you read the newspapers, they
have information that doesn't agree with each
other, the dates and things. So that is kind of
what I wanted to get, if that's OK.

Buchanan: Well, all right. But I have given it
so many times.

Gibbons: OK. Well, if you would rather not,
you could tell me, if you'd rather not answer.

Buchanan: No, that's all right.

Gibbons: In fact, I found your date of birth
in the newspapers. I've got lots of newspaper
articles here about your family.

[See newspaper article announcing her birth

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on page 44.]

Pease: She has a lot of information about the family here.

[Pease repeats Gibbons's statement because Buchanan did not hear it.]

Buchanan: Yeah. That's what I tell her. I've given it so many times that it's in all the papers.

Pease: She might have different questions.

Buchanan: Well maybe.

Gibbons: OK, and according to the newspaper, you were born in Crockett. Is that correct?

[Crockett is located in Contra Costa County, California.]

Buchanan: I was born in Crockett, April 13, 1899.

Gibbons: And who were your parents?

Buchanan: My parents were Edwin Simpson and her maiden name was Mamie Hewitt. She was a daughter of a captain. And they lived in Martinez. [Contra Costa County, California] Well, I won't go into the house, huh?

[Referring to a recent article that appeared in the newspaper about her parent's house.]

Pease: Show her the newspaper.

Gibbons: Did I put something on top of it?

Buchanan: No, no, no. It's not in there. Here. Look in the drawer.

Gibbons: So how is the name, Hewitt, spelled?

Pease: H-E-W-I-T-T.

[Pease spells the name.]

Gibbons: H-E-W-I-T-T. OK. Oh "Historic house on the"—

[Gibbons reads title of article in the newspaper that was just handed to her.]

Buchanan: This is the story of my grandparents. My mother's family.

[Referring to the newspaper article she has just located.]

Gibbons: Oh, and this just came out in the paper. This is February 2004. Wow.

Buchanan: Yeah. And the *Messenger* [newspaper] came out last month.

Gibbons: And so this is the story about your family.

Buchanan: About my mother's family. So it's probably not of interest.

Gibbons: No, anything is of interest, sure. It's all part of the background. So your father was he a sea captain?

Buchanan: My grandfather.

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Gibbons: Your grandfather was.

Buchanan: My mother's father was a sea captain.

Gibbons: And what did your father do?

Buchanan: My father was a plumber in Crockett. And then his father died and he had to go to Berkeley [Alameda County, California] to manage a coal and fuel company. And we lived in Berkeley from the time I was two until I married. How old was I? Twenty-three.

Gibbons: So that's how you ended up in Berkeley.

Buchanan: How's that?

Gibbons: So that's how you ended up in Berkeley. Your father moved there for business.

Buchanan: Yes.

Gibbons: So let's see, your father's name again was—

Buchanan: Edwin.

Gibbons: Edwin. OK.

Buchanan: Simpson.

Gibbons: And do you know where he was born?

Buchanan: He was born in Pacheco. [Contra Costa County, California]

Gibbons: Oh, OK. Do you know where he is buried? What cemetery he's buried in?

Buchanan: Where his family—

Gibbons: Yeah. Do you know where your father is buried, what cemetery he was buried in?

Buchanan: They were...they came from the middle east. One station...I do...one city, state...I can't remember. Indiana or some place like that. But they came back...came by, uh—

[Buchanan apparently did not hear or understand the question.]

Pease: Ship.

Buchanan: No, no.

Pease: Oh, wagon.

Buchanan: They came across the plains.

Pease: Wagon.

Buchanan: Yes, by wagon.

Gibbons: Came by wagon. OK, uh-huh.

Buchanan: My mother, my grandmother, my grandfather too. But they didn't know one another at that time. My grandmother came as a Simpson. No, no, no.

Pease: Hewitt.

Buchanan: As a Morgan. My grandmother was

a Morgan.

Gibbons: And this is on your mother's side? Is that your mother's mother?

Buchanan: My mother's mother was a Stanton.

Gibbons: Stanton, OK.

Buchanan: In Connecticut.

Gibbons: And you mentioned Morgan. Is that related to your mother or your father?

Buchanan: Father. My father's mother.

Gibbons: So they did not meet, your parents, until they arrived here?

Buchanan: The what?

Gibbons: Your parents did not meet until they arrived here?

Buchanan: No.

Gibbons: OK.

Buchanan: They met in Martinez.

Gibbons: Alright. And then when did your family arrive here? When did you arrive here in the Pittsburg area? [Contra Costa County, California]

Buchanan: My own family?

Gibbons: Your own family, the Simpsons.

Buchanan: They never lived in Pittsburg, in Berkeley.

Gibbons: And so how did you get to this area? How did you get to what today is Pittsburg?

Buchanan: To Pittsburg?

Gibbons: Uh-huh.

Buchanan: By the Oakland- Antioch Railroad.

Pease: What year?

Buchanan: 1819.

Pease: 1919.

Buchanan: I came to teach.

Gibbons: You came to teach. OK. And what grade did you teach?

Buchanan: Third and fourth.

Gibbons: Oh, my favorite grades. And what was the name of the school that you taught?

Buchanan: Pittsburg. Pittsburg School. It's the big building there on Black Diamond now [Black Diamond Street in Pittsburg].

Pease: Normal School they called it.

Gibbons: Pittsburg Normal School?

Pease: Was it called the Normal School, the Pittsburg Normal School?

Buchanan: No. Pittsburg Normal is where I went to learn to teach in San Francisco. No, it was just Pittsburg School Department.

Gibbons: Oh, uh-huh. So, how many years did you teach school?

Buchanan: Three years as a full teacher. And then, uh, three or four more years substituting.

Gibbons: Uh-huh. And were you married at that time?

Buchanan: When I substituted I was married. But the first three years, no. After I was here three years I married.

Gibbons: So you came to Pittsburg to teach.

Buchanan: Yes.

Gibbons: Is that why you came here?

Buchanan: Yes.

Gibbons: In 1919?

Pease: She lived in a house with the other teachers.

Gibbons: So you lived with other teachers Laurie is saying.

Buchanan: What?

Gibbons: You lived with other teachers?

[Gibbons repeats question because Buchanan did not hear it.]

Buchanan: Yeah.

Gibbons: Oh, OK. How many other teachers?

Buchanan: Six—

Gibbons: Wow.

Buchanan: —in a house on Cumberland Street the first year. Two of the girls went away and there were four the second year. The third year my sister came here to teach and she and I roomed together at the Hotel Los Medanos.

[The Hotel Los Medanos was located at the corner of 10th and Cumberland Streets in Pittsburg. According to the *Pittsburg Dispatch* newspaper, June 8, 1917, page 1, the formal opening of the hotel occurred in June 1917.]

Gibbons: Oh yes.

Buchanan: Which is now defunct.

Gibbons: Right. And what was your sister's name?

Buchanan: Edna.

Gibbons: Edna. And did you have any other sisters or brothers?

Buchanan: Grace who married Ed Parent. My sister Edna married Albert Becker. His father was head of the steel works [Columbia Steel in Pittsburg]. My fourth sister married a chemist here at the Columbia Steel. Kennedy was her name.

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[Grace L. Simpson married Edward N. Parent in December 1929. Edna G. Simpson married Albert N. Becker in September 1929. Margaret A. Simpson married William B. Kennedy in July 1933.]

Gibbons: And so five of you, is that right?

Buchanan: Four.

Gibbons: Four including you?

Buchanan: Yes.

Gibbons: Huh. So all girls.

Buchanan: Huh?

Gibbons: All girls. No boys.

Buchanan: All girls, no boys. That's my mother and the four girls. And this is the four girls and their children.

[Buchanan shares a photograph with Gibbons.]

Gibbons: Their daughters, it looks like.

Buchanan: Their daughters. And this is the daughter of a friend of mine who married my son who is her father. [Referring to Pease's father, William E. "Bill" Buchanan.] This is Joann.

[Joann Killen married William E. Buchanan, the son of Warren "Bud" and Ruth Buchanan, in 1952.]

Gibbons: Oh, that's your mom then.

[Referring to Laurie (Buchanan) Pease.] Oh, OK. And so this picture over here of the girls, who was the oldest?

Buchanan: The what?

Gibbons: Who was the oldest daughter? What was her name?

Pease: Who was the eldest sister?

Buchanan: I was the eldest.

Gibbons: You were the eldest.

Buchanan: Yes. Here, I am the oldest, next to the second, that's Edna Becker.

Gibbons: Edna Becker, OK.

Buchanan: The third is Grace Parent.

Gibbons: OK.

Buchanan: And the fourth is Margaret Kennedy.

Gibbons: OK.

Pease: I thought Gracie was the baby? Wasn't Gracie the baby?

Buchanan: No, Margaret.

Gibbons: Now when you taught in Pittsburg area was it called...must have been called Black Diamond at that time?

Buchanan: No. Uh, when I came here,

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it was...I can't remember if it took Black Diamond after I got here or before.

Pease: New York. New York Landing?

[New York Landing was an earlier name for the area.]

Buchanan: I think before. It was Pittsburg when I came here. It had been Black Diamond just a year or two before.

Gibbons: I think 1911...1911 is when the name changed from Black Diamond to Pittsburg.

[The community of Black Diamond changed its name to Pittsburg in 1911. See newspaper article on page 56. Ruth Simpson arrived in the area in 1919, after the name of the community changed from Black Diamond to Pittsburg.]

Buchanan: Yeah.

Pease: Yeah. That makes sense. It started as New York—

Buchanan: Yes, it was Pittsburg. Black Diamond—

Gibbons: Now when you came here, did your parents still live in Berkeley or did they come here too?

Buchanan: Did they what?

Gibbons: Did your parents come here?

[Gibbons repeats question because Buchanan did not hear it.]

Buchanan: They never were here.

Gibbons: Never were here. OK.

Buchanan: They lived in Berkeley. We went from Crockett to Berkeley. We were all raised in Berkeley. All went to school in Berkeley. Three of us graduated from San Francisco State Normal. The other [sister] was business. She was secretary at the University of California.

Gibbons: Huh. Wow. They went on to accomplish quite a bit, your sisters and you.

Buchanan: Yes.

Pease: She saw the fire from the earthquake [1906 San Francisco earthquake] from the hill where she lived.

Gibbons: Well that was one of the...Laurie is talking about the earthquake in 1906. I guess you probably were about seven weren't you when that earthquake happened? Do you remember the San Francisco earthquake?

Buchanan: That we built the cabin?

Pease: No, San Francisco earthquake? You saw it.

Buchanan: 1906.

Pease: Right. What did you do, your family?

Buchanan: Where was I? We were living in Berkeley on Parker Street, one block off Shattuck and it shook our chimneys down. And the morning of the earthquake, my

mother took the baby Grace and my father took my sister Edna and me and we lived in a house that had a long stairway. We went down the stairway to the sidewalk and we could see the flames across the bay [San Francisco Bay]. And I was very upset that it would get to us. And my father said, "No honey, there's water between us." But we lived two weeks without any chimney or heat until the chimneys could be built. And, uh, we were high and we had a basement and we had a wood and coal stove down there where my mother used to boil the water to wash the clothes. And she moved that stove out into the backyard and she cooked there for two weeks. And we ate outside. Luckily it was April, fairly good weather. I had a birthday there on the thirteenth [April 13]. My mother baked a cake out there in that yard on the stove.

Gibbons: So she still kept it very special, she kept it special for you for your birthday.

Buchanan: Oh, yes. Yes.

Gibbons: And was that your seventh birthday or eighth?

Buchanan: My seventh. And then, on the 24th was my sister Edna's birthday and my mother did the same thing. Baked another cake outdoors there.

Gibbons: Good for your mother.

Buchanan: I can't imagine it. In two weeks we got our chimney. You see the chimney went up the side of the house and it serviced the wood stove in the basement and the one on the first

floor. Same chimney. That's why they had to take the stove out of the basement because they had no chimney. But they built a new chimney in two weeks. But everybody's chimneys were down. Terrible rush.

Gibbons: And when did you meet your future husband?

Buchanan: When did I meet him?

Gibbons: Uh-huh.

Buchanan: Shortly after I got here [to Pittsburg]. Oh, two weeks after I got here.

Gibbons: Oh. Pretty quick, huh?

Buchanan: Uh, five teachers wanted to live together in this house...little cottage...three bedrooms and a sun porch. And we want... one girl had a sister who was a telephone operator here. So they had to get her...see if she would come and live with us to make six. So I went with her and a couple of others down to the telephone office which was a little brick building in back of my husband's family store. And we went in this little brick building and there on the railing sat my former [she meant to say future] husband and he was talking with the operator and we were introduced. But, there were other boyfriends.

Pease: Hey, hey now.

[Pease jokes with her grandmother.]

Buchanan: It was a big deal for, uh, teachers for escorts because these are all new companies

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and they had lots of young men learning the trades.

Gibbons: Oh, lots of eligible bachelors. Oh, yeah.

Buchanan: Yeah. We had lots of company. They had a dance every Saturday night, some Odd Fellows, Masons, Pythians would have a dance and we'd all go...was invited by somebody. I was invited by a young jeweler there. And we had another one of the men who had been in the Army and my husband had been in the Army too. And they got home. And—

Gibbons: And this is World War I.

Buchanan: Huh?

Gibbons: World War I?

Buchanan: One. Yeah. And, and Ed Linscheid, he had just come home. He was a little older and the six of us lived together and...no, we had two bedrooms on the sunporch. Two of us had bedrooms and the other two slept on the sunporch.

[Edmund R. Linscheid (1886–1983) served in the Army during World War I.

The 1920 U. S. Federal Census for District 6, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, lists Edmund R. Linscheid as age 33, single, and born in Minnesota. He is living with his father, mother, and sister on Cumberland Street. Linscheid's occupation is recorded as mechanic at a chemical plant.

In the 1930 U. S. Census for Township 6, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, Linscheid is listed as single and living on Cumberland Street. His occupation is recorded as merchant of groceries. In the 1940 census he is listed as a merchant in retail store.

Linscheid served as mayor of Pittsburg and in 1960 he was elected the Contra Costa County Supervisor of the 5th District, succeeding the position held by Warren "Bud" Buchanan.]

Pease: The teachers?

Buchanan: And we all took turns cooking and keeping house.

Gibbons: And do you remember where that was, what address?

Buchanan: The address?

Gibbons: Do you remember where that was in Pittsburg, what street?

Buchanan: Cumberland.

Gibbons: Cumberland. Uh—huh.

Buchanan: And now it's gone.

Gibbons: Oh, OK.

Buchanan: It's now a subdivision.

Gibbons: I see. Huh. So, you met your husband—

Buchanan: I think it was 429 Cumberland.

Gibbons: All right.

Buchanan: At home.

Buchanan: I think that was it.

Gibbons: At home. So was it a small event?

Gibbons: Did you call your husband Warren or Bud?

Buchanan: What?

Buchanan: Did I do what?

Gibbons: Was it a small event?

Gibbons: What did you call your husband, Warren or Bud?

Buchanan: Yes. Family.

Buchanan: Bud.

Gibbons: Family. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Gibbons: Bud. You called him Bud. Did most people call him Bud?

Buchanan: I think fifty [people].

Pease: No pictures.

Buchanan: Bud, yes. They all called him Bud. And his father was called Bill and his son was called Bill.

[No pictures exist of the wedding event. See newspaper articles regarding the wedding on pages 67 and 68.]

Gibbons: Yeah. I noticed that. It gets a little confusing, huh? So it was Warren G. and you said the G—

Buchanan: No. Why, I don't know. We didn't seem to take pictures in those days.

Buchanan: Warren Grant.

Gibbons: I hear that a lot, actually, from people.

Gibbons: That's my brother's name. Yeah. Nice name. And when did you marry?

Pease: She hears that a lot.

Buchanan: August 2, 1922.

[Pease repeats Gibbons' statement to Buchanan.]

Gibbons: 1922. And did you marry here in Pittsburg?

Buchanan: No. We didn't have a camera. Now its pictures all...I've got three albums of pictures now.

Buchanan: No. In Berkeley.

Gibbons: Well, then she's doing a good job for the rest of the family, huh?

Gibbons: In Berkeley.

Pease: [Laughs] Actually she's been drowning

in them.

Gibbons: So how did you feel about marrying into this well-known family?

Buchanan: Well, really, at that time they were just, uh...they owned the grocery store and my mother-in-law was the first postmistress here.

Gibbons: And that was Nora. Is that right?

[Nora (Carroll) Buchanan started as postmistress in 1897.]

Buchanan: And she had the first telephone in the store [Buchanan's Department Store in Pittsburg]. I didn't feel any...about into this family. It was a good family and they were very influential in the town. And, uh, during hard times and all they just helped everybody. And during the depression they let them have food. And it was an Italian mostly settlement downtown. And the Italians would go to Alaska every year and fish. And then they would get their money when they came home. And they would always come and pay their grocery bill. And it was the same way in the depression. At that time, we lived on the ranch and we raised sheep and we had cows and all. And we did help families. We had sheep and we helped.

[The ranch was located on Buchanan Road in Pittsburg.]

Gibbons: And that was one of the questions I had was about the ranch. Now, do you know when the Buchanan family first left the ranch and moved to Pittsburg to run the

store? [Gibbons repeats the question because Buchanan did not hear it.] When the family left the ranch...I think they were here very early and then they left to run the store.

Buchanan: When I married, uh, the family lived upstairs over the store on Black Diamond [Street]. And we lived out on Eleventh and Black Diamond [Pittsburg]. And we wanted to build a house of our own and the family were gonna sell...are gonna move the store to Railroad [Railroad Avenue in Pittsburg]. Build this big store. So we bought lots from Hooper, three lots—

Gibbons: C. A. Hooper huh?

[Charles A. Hooper owned land that formerly belonged to L. L. Robinson, a railroad builder, mining businessman, and investor. It is estimated that Robinson once owned 8,000 acres on the banks of the San Joaquin River in what today is part of Pittsburg. See page 47. See pages 56 and 57 for photographs of the Buchanan's Department Store.]

Buchanan: And we were gonna build two houses on three lots. And we got a plan with a common driveway so we only built two houses with one driveway. And my in-laws lived in one house and we lived in the other.

Gibbons: And that was here? [At the ranch.]

Buchanan: On Eighth Street in Pittsburg.

Gibbons: Oh, OK. Still in Pittsburg.

Pease: Do you want to know when this land

was purchased? Ooma, do you know when this land here was homesteaded? When the property, the cattle ranch...what year?

Buchanan: [...]

Pease: That it was originally purchased before somebody settled on it?

Buchanan: That it was purchased from the government.

Pease: Right.

Buchanan: No.

Pease: But it was before the 1919? It was before—

Buchanan: I, I,...he got it as a grant.

Pease: Right. Right. How many acres? One hundred and sixty?

Buchanan: One hundred and sixty.

Pease: Right. It was like a homestead.

Gibbons: So, so they actually homesteaded this land?

Buchanan: The grandfather, my husband's grandfather [William Buchanan] and grandmother [Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan] owned...they got it from the government, 160 acres.

[According to the National Archives website (www.archives.gov) regarding The Homestead

Act of 1862:

President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act on May 20, 1862. On January 1, 1863, Daniel Freeman made the first claim under the Act, which gave citizens or future citizens up to 160 acres of public land provided they live on it, improve it, and pay a small registration fee. The Government granted more than 270 million acres of land while the law was in effect.]

Gibbons: And do you know, what did they do to the land at that time they acquired it?

Buchanan: What year was it acquired?

Gibbons: What did they...did they build homes here on the land after it was homesteaded? Do you know anything about the land early on?

Pease: When they initially bought the land, was it for an agricultural preserve or a cattle ranch?

Buchanan: Yeah.

Pease: What was the intention?

Buchanan: Farming.

Pease: To make it viable for—

Buchanan: Farming.

Gibbons: Farming. OK.

Buchanan: Hay ranch [...]

Gibbons: And so you said you moved here to the ranch. Do you know when you moved to the ranch?

Buchanan: 19...when did they redo the cabin I say?

Pease: '33 or '32. [1933 or 1932]

Buchanan: No, no. '38. [1938]

Gibbons: Uh-huh. OK.

Pease: So your cabin built in '39. Right?

Buchanan: Uh, we moved here in '38, 1938. My son [William E. "Bill" Buchanan] was very ill and, uh—

[See newspaper articles on page 132.]

Gibbons: And is this Laurie's father?

Buchanan: It was her father. And we had to take him to a sanitarium in Los Gatos [Santa Clara County, California] and he...but he got over it. And they said well you have to be careful let him...and in the meantime these folks had wanted us to come out here and live.

Gibbons: Uh-huh. And when you say these folks, who do you mean these folks?

Buchanan: The great uncle and my father's grandparents.

[She meant her husband's grandparents,

William and Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan and perhaps her husband's uncle and aunt, James and Janette (Buchanan) Syme.]

Gibbons: OK. Uh-huh. So they wanted you to come out here and live.

Buchanan: They wanted us to take over the ranch. And they moved to town. I didn't want to because I had a nice house in town. But when the boy [her son, William E. "Bill" Buchanan] was ill I—

[End side 1 of tape one; begin side 2.]

Buchanan: —and fix it up you know, do the porches and paint it and what not. I don't know. And so, a brother-in-law, my husband's sister's husband [Howard Kelley] was an electrician. He put in the electricity.

[Norine Buchanan, 1901–1968, was the daughter of William J. and Nora Buchanan and sister of Warren "Bud" Buchanan. Norine Buchanan married Howard Sadoc Kelley, 1897–1944.]

Gibbons: So that's the first time you had electricity here was around 1938.

Buchanan: 1938. And my husband's...oh that...her husband did the electricity. And my third sister, Grace Parent, her husband Ed Parent came and dug the hole for the sewer. And all of our friends helped. And Seeno Company, who was owned by this boy's grandparents, did the house all over. I mean they fixed the porches, they painted around for \$2,000. And we moved here.

Gibbons: So, prior to you coming here, there was a house here.

Buchanan: Yeah.

Gibbons: So it sounds like it was in disrepair? It wasn't in very good shape and so it had to be fixed before you moved in?

Pease: Did William...did Willy and his wife, they built the original white farmhouse?

Buchanan: They brought it from town.

Pease: They brought it up from town. [...] And that was here before you moved out right?

Buchanan: Oh, yeah.

Pease: And that's what—

Buchanan: That was an old shanty that I wanted done over where they lived. They had no plumbing. They had to go out to an outhouse and so they put in the plumbing and the bathroom and, uh, electricity and a water heater—

Pease: She has pictures of all of this.

[See photographs on pages 123 and 124.]

Buchanan: —electric stove and a little tiny kitchen.

Gibbons: And where did the building stand? Was it here, was it further out, the house that was here?

Pease: Where was it on the property?

Buchanan: On this property?

Gibbons: Where was the house in 1938?

Buchanan: Right on the road here.

Gibbons: Right here.

Buchanan: Right where the third house is now, where her mother lives now.

[Referring to Pease's mother, Joann (Killeen) Buchanan.]

Gibbons: Oh, OK. Uh-huh. And I know behind that is the old barn still. Is that right? The barn is still there?

Pease: Barn, the original barn. The barn—

[According to Pease, the barn was built in 1901.]

Buchanan: It's still there, yeah. And the windmill was up in the hills and that's where the water...the wind would rotate and they had a pipeline down to the house. And we had a tank house in back of the little house and that's where the water was in this tank.

Gibbons: And so, let's see, there was a building here and then there was a building moved up from Pittsburg? Is that right?

Pease: There wasn't, uh, no—

Buchanan: No other buildings here.

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Pease: The one that was moved up was the original white house that she eventually moved into. And that was moved up from town [Pittsburg].

[The *Pittsburg Post Dispatch* newspaper, September 3, 1946, page one states: "One of the few native sons who can list his birthplace as New York Landing. W. J. (Bill) Buchanan... was born at the foot of Railroad avenue, near Second street in a house since moved to the Buchanan ranch and now occupied by the Warren Buchanan family."]

Gibbons: Did you have any other structures on the ranch? Did you have like a chicken coop?

Buchanan: Any other what?

Gibbons: Structures. Buildings. Did you have any other buildings on the ranch?

Buchanan: No. No. Just a tank house and the house. And then in the war years, the second World War, we got a little house given us that we put out there so we could hire a man to take care of the sheep and all.

Gibbons: OK. Yeah, that was one of my questions. So you had hired help.

Buchanan: Later on.

Gibbons: Later on, uh-huh, to take care of sheep.

Buchanan: During the war. Yeah.

[The 1940 *Census for Township 6, Contra Costa County, California*, lists Warren, age 42

as a grocer in a grocery store. Also listed is Ruth L., age 41; their son, William, age 11; and John J. Dowell, age 28, a laborer on the ranch.]

Gibbons: I see you had sheep and you said you raised [...]

Buchanan: Cows.

Gibbons: And you had cows.

Buchanan: Horses, donkeys.

Gibbons: Wow. Did you ride horses?

Buchanan: Yes. I used to ride the ranch. I had my own horse and my husband bought me a saddle [?] and we'd go over the hill.

Gibbons: Through the mining area?

[Referring to the coal mining townsites of Somersville and Nortonville.]

Buchanan: Down into Clayton [Contra Costa County, California]. We followed the railroad from Pittsburg to Nortonville and then branch off, go through the hills down to Nort...to Clayton.

[From the San Joaquin River, Nortonville is approximately 6 miles south of Pittsburg.]

Gibbons: Was there anyone living in Nortonville when you did that? Do you remember anyone living in Nortonville when you rode your horse through?

Pease: Was there anybody living in Nortonville at the time that you were riding through there?

Buchanan: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Not so many people. They were starting to give up the mines. But there were some people there. Uh, the minister that had been there lived there and his family.

Gibbons: What was his name?

Pease: She'll remember you watch. You'll remember.

[Pease directs her statement at her grandmother.]

Buchanan: I can't remember because they moved finally to Pittsburg and he died and they had one son. I can't remember that.

Gibbons: Well you might remember it later.

Buchanan: It was a Welsh name, but I can't remember.

Pease: Ask her about Bud and Nortonville.

Gibbons: OK, I was going to do that too.

Buchanan: And there weren't very many people who lived there. Very few because I know one day my father-in-law was going to take groceries here to the ex-minister and he said, "Do you want to come along?" And I said, "Yes." So I went along with him and he delivered groceries to these...to this family.

Gibbons: That's OK, you'll think of it.

[Buchanan is still trying to remember the name of the family.] Did you know other ranchers in the area like the Ginochio family, the Loughers—

Buchanan: That lived up there?

Gibbons: Yes. That ranched in the area.

Buchanan: Yes. There were Abrams. They owned the ranch right behind us. And there were Thomas' who were on the old road now when you go to Nortonville [Nortonville Road]. And that's where the minister lived, above Thomas'. The old house is still there. And part of the Thomas family are still there.

[The Abrams family lived south of the Buchanan ranch and north of the Somersville and Nortonville townsites. The Thomas family lived on the west side of Nortonville Road, south of Pittsburg. Nora (Carroll) Buchanan, the wife of W. J. Buchanan, was the sister of Joanne C. "Anna/Annie" Carroll. Annie Carroll married William Abrams in 1882. See page 98.

It is not clear if this William Abrams was related to the Abrams that owned the property behind the Buchanan Ranch. A newspaper article states that William Abrams was "actively engaged in business in Pittsburg."]

Pease: The sisters are there.

[Pease is referring to Gloria Thomas and her sister, Dolores, that lived on the Thomas Ranch on Nortonville Road at the time of the interview. The former Thomas Ranch is now part of Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD.]

Gibbons: And how about Bud Ginochio, the Ginochio family, did you know the Ginochio family?

Buchanan: Ginochio?

Gibbons: Uh-huh.

Buchanan: They were Clayton. And I can't remember no...oh I, I knew them, I met them and all but we were never close friends. There was a ranch next to us here—

Pease: Is she thinking of Arata? Arata?

Buchanan: No. Aratas were the next one to that.

[The Eugene Arata Ranch was located on Somersville Road, southeast of the Buchanan Ranch and north of the Somersville coal mining townsite.]

Pease: Latimore?

Buchanan: Latimore were the ones in back. Abrams are here and Latimore is here. Latimore is on the road, across the road [Nortonville Road] from the Thomas's.

[See photograph of Latimore residence on page 114 and Thomas residence on page 115.]

Gibbons: And did you know the Aratas? Aratas? The Arata family, did you know them?

Buchanan: Arata? Yeah, I knew of them, yeah. Aratas and I, we were never friends.

Gibbons: How about the, uh—

Buchanan: Aratas oh—

Pease: Frank [Arata].

Buchanan: Oh, they were on the Antioch [cross conversation] Oh, yeah. Frank Arata.

Gibbons: Did you know his sisters, Dollie Arata and Stella and, let's see, Elinor? Did you know the Arata sisters?

Pease: Elinor or Stella—

Gibbons: Elinor they called her Babe because—

[Elinor Arata was nicknamed "Babe" because she was the youngest of the Arata's nine children.]

Buchanan: Arata?

Pease: Arata. You knew Babe Arata.

Buchanan: I don't remember the women, the sisters.

Gibbons: She remembers Frank [Arata]. I heard Frank— [cross conversation]

Pease: We all remember Frank.

Buchanan: Frank used to come here and we used to trade...oh, he bought some of our grain, and, uh, horses. Yes, we knew Frank quite well.

Gibbons: So, so you traded with him. You

bought grain...he bought grain from you—

Buchanan: Well, they would buy grain from us, sell it with their own. The same way with cattle, uh, the sheep and all. They're Stockton [San Joaquin County, California] companies that used to buy the sheep. Sometimes they'd put them all together and trade [?].

Gibbons: Did you know the Lougher family? Lougher?

Buchanan: Concord?

Gibbons: Lougher. [Gibbons spells the name.] L-O-U-G-H-E-R, Lougher family. They lived up on Somersville Road just above the Arata Ranch.

Buchanan: Who are they?

Gibbons: Lougher. Elmer Lougher, Jack Lougher.

Buchanan: Lougher?

Pease: Yes.

Gibbons: Lougher.

Buchanan: Lougher. Yes.

Gibbons: This is how they spelled their name. Lougher.

[Gibbons writes the name on a piece of paper for Buchanan to see because she can't hear and understand the name that Gibbons is pronouncing.]

Buchanan: [Obvious recognition.] Lougher! Yes. Yes.

Gibbons: I figured you did. Did you know Elmer— [cross conversation] I called him Jack.

Buchanan: Yeah. We knew them.

Gibbons: Did you ever visit their ranch?

Buchanan: No.

Gibbons: Did they ever come here?

Buchanan: Not the Loughers, but the Arata...Frank Arata came all the time. Yeah. Loughers, Loughers, Loughers.

Gibbons: Yeah, they lived just above the Aratas.

Buchanan: Yes, Aratas.

Gibbons: Leyshon Lougher, his son was Jack.

[Elmer "Jack" Lougher (1911–1996) was the son of Leyshon and Lizzie (Ginocchio) Lougher. The Lougher Ranch was located on Somersville Road, south of the Buchanan ranch. See photograph on page 119.]

Buchanan: I can't remember what our associations were...Lougher.

Gibbons: But you knew other ranchers in the area?

Buchanan: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Gibbons: Did you ever know a man called George Hutchinson? George Hutchinson? He used to work on the different ranches.

Buchanan: Not on ours.

Gibbons: Not on yours. OK, I was curious. We've heard a lot of stories about George.

Buchanan: Hutchin?

Gibbons: Hutchinson. George Hutchinson. He used to work at the Arata Ranch.

Buchanan: Yeah.

Gibbons: And he worked at the Lougher Ranch.

Buchanan: Yeah. On that side of the mine.

[The Lougher and Arata Ranches were located south of the Buchanan Ranch and north of the Somersville coal mining townsite. For information regarding ranch hand George Hutchinson, see page 75.]

Gibbons: On that side. Yeah, yeah. Well this is very interesting. Let's see what else I have here.

Buchanan: Lougher. I'm trying to think what connection we had with them. I know it was something.

Gibbons: So when you lived here on the ranch...when you lived on the ranch and you raised grain, was your husband...did he do this full time? Was he a County Supervisor by this point?

Buchanan: My father-in-law was a County Supervisor from District 5. He was Supervisor for 48 years.

Gibbons: That's a long time.

Buchanan: I think it was the longest of any. They don't call them supervisors in all the states. I forget what they call them. But his position was the longest in the United States when he died. And when he died, [California] Governor Warren appointed my husband [Warren Buchanan] to take his [W. J. Buchanan] place. And he was supervisor for ten years.

[William J. Buchanan was a Contra Costa County Supervisor from 1904 to 1950. According to the *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper, October 4, 1950, Buchanan "was a member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors continuously since his first election in 1904. He is the oldest elected California official in point of both age and service." See newspaper articles on pages 87 and 88.]

Gibbons: And did your husband, did he work here on the ranch?

Buchanan: No.

Gibbons: No. Did he run the store?

Buchanan: He...well, uh, he was in the war. [World War I] But he came home and went into the grocery business. And then when they sold that, he started a real estate business and that's when he passed away. He was a realtor. And his son, her father, carried on the realty.

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[Referring to William "Bill" Buchanan, father of Laurie (Buchanan) Pease who was a realtor. Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan enlisted in the Army in 1918. He passed away in March 1970.]

Gibbons: Uh-huh. I remember that. And I see conflicting initials. Your father was William. [Referring to Pease.] What was his middle name?

Pease: Edwin.

Gibbons: Edwin. OK. One time I saw a C—

Pease: Warren Grant Buchanan, William Edwin Buchanan.

Gibbons: OK.

Pease: You know you've seen William um... yeah, Warren's father, William is his....that's where the confusion comes in. [Speaking louder for Buchanan to hear.] William, your father-in-law's middle name...your father-in-law, his middle name. Willy's middle name.

Buchanan: William.

Pease: William what? I know, we know this too. James?

Gibbons: William James. Right?

Pease: James. William James.

Buchanan: William James. You're right. William James, Warren Grant, William Edwin.

Pease: Right.

Gibbons: She's got it down.

Pease: Yeah.

Gibbons: Let's see, you mentioned riding your horse through Nortonville. What was the area like when you rode your horse? Were there a lot of buildings left?

Buchanan: What was what?

Pease: When you rode your horse through Nortonville, what did the area look like? Were there structures? Were there houses?

[Pease repeats the question since Buchanan did not hear it the first time.]

Buchanan: No.

Pease: What was there?

Buchanan: Just grain and wild oats.

Pease: No buildings that you saw?

Buchanan: No. Not until you got down into Clayton.

Pease: That's OK. She rode [...]

Gibbons: Yeah, well I'm sure you probably rode through the area after many of the buildings were gone.

Buchanan: Oh, yes. Yes.

Gibbons: When they moved them [the buildings] down to nearby towns.

Buchanan: Well they started to break up—

Pease: What year?

Buchanan: I don't know.

Pease: Yeah. Now who goes back to Nortonville?

Buchanan: There weren't...there weren't very many... other people were starting to come into Clayton and build and they had stores and a post office and a bar you know—

Pease: Saloon.

Buchanan: What is the name of the bar?

Pease: The Clayton Saloon?

Buchanan: No. It's there now.

Pease: I know. Clayton Club.

Buchanan: No.

Pease: Well, I don't know. I don't hang out there. You know where it is though? Right across from the Historical Museum.

Buchanan: Three or four people have owned it since then.

Pease: Who lived in Nortonville, Ooma? Who lived in Nortonville? Oompa B, Bud? Who went to school in Nortonville, Somersville?

Who went to school there in our family?

Buchanan: Uh, grandpa.

Pease: Grandpa. Willy?

Buchanan: Yeah, William, William James. And his sister, uh, Jennie who lived there—

Pease: Jennie, yeah.

Buchanan: Jennie, the grandmother and grandfather and Jennie. And then William married Nora and he left to live in town. But, Jennie still lives on the ranch. And the grandmother used to take her eggs and produce and walk to Clayton.

Gibbons: Oh, wow.

Buchanan: And the little lamp I have in the bedroom she bought, cause she loved it and she didn't have much money. And when she came home, her husband had a fit. Spend money on that little lamp.

Gibbons: And where did she buy the lamp? Did she buy it in Clayton?

Buchanan: Lasells Store—

Gibbons: Oh, Cheap Cash Store in Nortonville. Oh, isn't that—

Buchanan: Nortonville. She walked to Nortonville with the eggs and all and sell them. And then, this day she bought the little lamp.

Gibbons: So, this is Jennie. Oh, look at that.

Oh, it's wonderful.

[Pease has brought a lamp from the back
bedroom for Gibbons to see.]

Buchanan: No, not that one.

Pease: This one? Which one?

Buchanan: The one with the shade on the
other dresser.

Pease: Oh.

Gibbons: And so Jennie is the sister of
William James.

Buchanan: Yeah.

Gibbons: And what were the other sisters or
brothers names?

Buchanan: Oh, they had no others.

Gibbons: Just two of them. Uh-hum. OK.

Buchanan: And she married a Scotsman
named Symes. S-Y-M-E-S.

[Buchanan spells the name. The name is
actually spelled "Syme" without the "s" on
the end. Jeanette "Jennie" Buchanan married
James Syme *circa* 1905. See photograph on
page 39.]

Gibbons: Oh, OK. Uh-huh. And where did
they live? Did they live in the local area?

Buchanan: They lived here.

Gibbons: On the ranch [Buchanan Ranch].

Buchanan: Uh-huh.

Gibbons: And was that—

Buchanan: Her mother and father [Catherine
and William Buchanan] had died and she and
Symes lived here and they were the ones that
wanted us to come out here and they would
move into town [Pittsburg].

Gibbons: Oh, I see. And so once you arrived
here, they moved to town.

Buchanan: Yes.

Gibbons: Oh. OK.

Buchanan: Jennie.

Gibbons: Jennie.

Pease: What year did she say that was?

Gibbons: She didn't say a year.

Pease: Do you know what year? About what
time was that? What year?

Buchanan: That we moved?

Pease: No, that Jennie lived here.

Buchanan: Well, she was born here.

Gibbons: So, prior to 1938.

[Regarding who lived on the ranch and when

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they lived there:

The 1900 U.S. Federal Census for New York Precinct, Contra Costa County, California, lists William B., a native of Scotland, born January 1826, age 74, as a farmer owning his own farm. The census also lists his wife, Catherine, a native of Scotland, born June 1833, and age 66. Both immigrated to the United States in 1856.

The 1910 U.S. Federal Census for Township 6, Contra Costa County, California, records James Syme, age 43, a native of Scotland and his immigration year as 1887. His occupation is listed as farmer owning his farm. His wife, Jenny [sic] C. is 46 years old. The census indicates that they have been married five years. The Symes are also documented as living on the farm in the 1920 and 1930 census records.

The 1940 U.S. Census for Township 6, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California, records James Syme, age 73, and his wife, Janet [sic], age 76, living in a home on Black Diamond Street in Pittsburg. James is not employed.

Also recorded in the 1940 census for Township 6, are Warren G. Buchanan, age 42; his wife, Ruth, age 41; their son, William, age 11; and a laborer. They are documented as living on a farm and Buchanan's occupation as a grocer in a grocery store.

Based on the census information and Ruth Buchanan's memory, William and Catherine Buchanan lived on the ranch until the early 1900s. Their daughter, Jeanette "Jennie" and her husband, James Syme, lived on the ranch from the early 1900s to 1938. Jennie Buchanan's nephew Warren "Bud" and his wife, Ruth Buchanan, began living on the ranch in 1938. Bud Buchanan died in 1970. Ruth Buchanan continued to live on the

ranch until her death in 2005.]

Pease: Yeah. I know when she [Jeanette "Jennie" (Buchanan) Syme] was born, I have her headstone at the family plot I can check.

Buchanan: I don't know how old she was. She was in her eighties when she died I guess.

Pease: When did she die? 19—

Buchanan: I lived here [the ranch] when she died.

Pease: Yeah, you did. She was like 64 or 63—

Buchanan: We lived here five or six years before she passed away because I used to go and visit her when she lived in town [Pittsburg].

[Jennie and her husband, James Syme, are buried at the Buchanan family plot at Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery on East 18th Street in Antioch, California. The gravestone lists her name as Jeanette Buchanan Syme, born 1863 and died 1950. She was 87 at the time of her death. James Syme was born in 1867 and died in 1942. He was 75 at the time of his death.]

Pease: Oh, oh, OK, I know what you're saying.

Gibbons: Was her real name Janet? Was her real name Janet? You said Jennie. What was her real name? Jennie is a nickname.

Buchanan: Jannel I guess.

Pease: Jeannette. Yeah. J-E-A-N-N-E-T-T-E.

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[Pease spells the name. On the gravestone, the name is spelled with one "n." She is listed as Jeanette.]

[Pease repeats the question because Buchanan did not hear it.]

Gibbons: OK.

Buchanan: Jeanette.

Pease: Yeah. Jeanette Symes. Yeah.

Gibbons: So she passed away just a few days before William James Buchanan.

Pease: Yeah. She was really ill then.

Gibbons: Hum. Very interesting.

Pease: I can find out for you very easily over at Oak View.

[Referring to Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery on East 18th Street in Antioch, California, where the Buchanan family plot is located. Jeanette (Buchanan) Syme died on October 1, 1950. Her brother, William J. Buchanan, died five days later on October 6, 1950.]

Gibbons: Your father-in-law [William J. Buchanan], as supervisor, was involved with many events for the coal mining area. They would have pioneer picnics and he would host that.

Buchanan: Laugh at what?

Pease: Remember, uh, William, your father-in-law, he was involved as County Supervisor, he was involved in many activities in Nortonville.

Buchanan: He was mayor of Pittsburg.

Pease: But did he also oversee events like the pioneer picnic up near the coal mines? Did he have a lot of involvement—

Buchanan: Oh, well...yes, in fact, there were county questions and all like there are today. I mean the county had to settle on.

Pease: Right. But did he participate in some of the celebrations...like the Pioneer Day, that type of thing?

Buchanan: Oh, yeah. I don't think they really had those until later. They used to have gatherings like picnics or something of everybody that had ever lived up there.

[Some of the earliest pioneer picnics held for former residents of the Mount Diablo Coal Field occurred in the 1930s. See newspaper articles on page 74.]

Pease: Yeah. What did he do with that? Did you ever go?

Buchanan: No. I don't think it was a public thing like it is today.

Pease: I see.

Buchanan: But, families would all get together.

Pease: More like a family reunion.

Buchanan: Yeah. There are lots of people that lived up there originally that came to town [Pittsburg] to live. I'm trying to think of one family, lives there at, uh, at the Southern Pacific Station [in Pittsburg].

Gibbons: Daley?

Buchanan: Huh?

Gibbons: Daley?

[Gibbons is referring to Norma Daley and her family who lived in Somersville. Norma's father was Peter Daley.]

Buchanan: Yeah.

Gibbons: He [William J. Buchanan] was involved in many events that happened in the mining area and the old cemetery [Rose Hill Cemetery].

Buchanan: And they were...they helped us start the Pittsburg Historical Society.

Gibbons: Um-huh. That's right. Do you remember any events happening on the ranch or near the ranch [Buchanan Ranch]? Events like fires, do you remember any fires that happened in the area?

Buchanan: No, I can't remember any fires.

Gibbons: That's good. Did you—

Buchanan: I don't remember any except one we had [cross conversation with Pease] in the barn. Fourth of July, kids were there. The

corner of the barn over there. That was burned. That's the only fire that I can remember out here.

Gibbons: Was that before the houses were there, back there?

Buchanan: The houses were all built then.

[Referring to the housing sub-division that now surrounds the Buchanan property.]

Pease: Up here, but not around here. That was before '72, because 1972 is when they built the houses.

Buchanan: When that was burned?

Pease: No, when they built the subdivision was '72. When Seeno built—

Buchanan: Started building?

Pease: '72. [1972]

Buchanan: When we sold part of it? I can't remember the year. Those thirty acres before Seeno bought.

Pease: Over there.

Buchanan: Thirty acres. Bud Davi did that subdivision.

Pease: Yeah, Inverness Drive and [...]. It goes all [...]

Buchanan: And after that, Seeno bought all but six acres which is this where we are now.

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Gibbons: Well, I had just a couple more questions for you because we are almost out of tape. Did you ever attend any events in the mining area? Like in 1934 they had a special event in the cemetery there.

[Gibbons is referring to the dedication of the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West monument in Rose Hill Cemetery that occurred on October 7, 1934.]

Buchanan: Yes. No, I don't think...I went to one that was out the Somersville Road. No I didn't, come to think of it.

Pease: Now what about William, didn't he talk about when he was growing up?

Buchanan: Oh, yes.

Pease: What did he tell you about growing up?

Buchanan: Oh, yes.

Pease: What did he tell you about going to school?

Buchanan: We have pictures of that and the school. And I think I've given down to the—

Pease: Yeah, we have them.

Gibbons: So William went to school in Nortonville. And what did he have to share with you about going to school in Nortonville? William...what did William have to share with you about going to school in Nortonville?

Pease: What did William share with you about

going to school in Nortonville? What did he tell you? You have his chalk tablet. Don't you have his chalk tablet?

[Pease repeats the question for Buchanan.]

Buchanan: I think...I don't remember. I think they used to ride up on the coal train.

[The Black Diamond Coal Mining Company operated a train between Nortonville and the San Joaquin River near current day Railroad Avenue, Pittsburg.]

Pease: Did they, to get up to school?

Buchanan: To school. I don't know whether they walked home or what. I can't remember that.

Gibbons: And he did that because there was no school—

Buchanan: They didn't have—

Gibbons: There was no school in Pittsburg, right?

Buchanan: No. No buses. No nothing.

Pease: Nothing. No. But he didn't talk about his childhood much about doing that?

Buchanan: No. I can't remember much. Only a child riding on the ranch.

Pease: Riding here on the property.

Buchanan: With his sister.

Gibbons: What did he have to say about his childhood on the ranch?

Buchanan: Work.

Gibbons: Work. That's what he remembered.

Buchanan: Helped his father. And as they grew, that's what he did. He worked cutting hay and he did that even after they were married. And then this little store on York Street [in Pittsburg] was being sold. These people were moving to Arizona and mother Buchanan who had been at home doing nothing begged to buy this little store.

Gibbons: This is Nora Buchanan?

Buchanan: Nora. And they did. And while he was out in the fields cutting hay and all, she ran the store. And then, when that was over in the summer, he would come and the two of them would run it until they wanted to build this big store.

[Buchanan purchased his first store in 1896. It was located at First and York Streets in Black Diamond (now Pittsburg). See page 52.]

Pease: Over on East Fifth [in Pittsburg].

Buchanan: On York [street]. On First and Black Diamond. And it was a lovely big store and nice living quarters upstairs. Had a big living room and a bay window looked off onto the river and a big dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms. Nice living. Bud and I lived there with them for close to a year while our house was being built on Twelfth Street [in Pittsburg].

[Buchanan is most likely describing the second location of the Buchanan Store on First and Black Diamond Streets. They moved their business in 1906. See photographs on pages 56 and 57.]

Gibbons: Well, I think I have kind of a picture of it.

[End of tape 1, side 2. Begin tape 2, side 1.]

Buchanan: What was my father's middle name? Edwin? Edwin E. Elias? Edwin E. Simpson. But what was the E for?

Pease: Um, I would have to look.

Buchanan: They got E. C. there. But his middle initial was E, E. E. Simpson.

Gibbons: Do you know where your father is buried? Do you know what cemetery your father is buried?

Buchanan: My father? He was cremated in Oakland [Alameda County].

Gibbons: In Oakland. And how about your mother?

Buchanan: The same.

Gibbons: Same. OK. So I have all kinds of things. I will make you copies so that you could have these. I have the marriage announcement for your parents.

Buchanan: You have?

Gibbons: Yeah.

Nora—

Buchanan: Full married names?

Buchanan: That's the 52nd Anniversary.

Gibbons: Not your parents, but let's see—

Gibbons: And that article says that they celebrated quietly at home. And I have seen another article that says they had 300 guests at an anniversary party. Did you go to an anniversary party for them?

Pease: Nora—

Gibbons: Nora Carroll. And like I say, there's lots of other questions, but I don't want to tire her, I probably did already.

Pease: Where...Ooma, where did they celebrate their anniversary? Did they have a big party?

[Gibbons is discussing ending the interview so that she doesn't tire 104 year old Buchanan.]

Pease: But this was good because she'll remember more [...]

Buchanan: Well, it was all at home. It was like a...like a reception more.

Buchanan: That's mother and dad—

Pease: How many people?

[Referring to newspaper article Gibbons has shared. See page 76.]

Buchanan: Oh, whoever wanted to come.

Gibbons: Yeah. One last question. I have to show you.

Pease: Three hundred?

Buchanan: I have their wedding license.

Buchanan: I don't remember. Uh, I have pictures of that. But, uh, Norine was there but her husband had died. Bud's sister, Norine.

Gibbons: Do you know who that is?

[Norine (Buchanan) Kelley's husband was Howard Kelley who died in 1944. Norine was the daughter of William J. and Nora Buchanan. See page 82.]

[Gibbons shares a photograph that appeared in the newspaper.]

Pease: Her sister-in-law.

Buchanan: That is a good picture of them.

Gibbons: OK.

Pease: That's a great picture.

Gibbons: We are referring to the *Pittsburg Post Dispatch* article from January 1945. Now, that's

Buchanan: She [Norine Kelley] was a widow and she had Margaret, and Cathy, Catherine. Well, Catherine was sick. It was the measles.

But she was sick on the 50th Anniversary.
But little Margaret, she was in the picture.
And I had a lavender dress and she loved this
lavender dress. She hung on to me the whole
afternoon. It was beautiful my husband said. I
remember that.

Gibbons: Sounds like a fond memory. That's
nice. How did the Buchanan family feel when
the store closed down. When the store closed
down, what was the family feeling at that point?

Buchanan: How did they feel?

Gibbons: Yeah, when the store closed.

Buchanan: About me comin' in?

Pease: When they had to close the store.
When they had to close down Buchanan
Department. Was that hard? Were they ready?

Buchanan: Well, I'm trying to think when
they closed it. I think they felt it was ready.
William Buchanan had passed away and
Dad didn't want to run a store. And so, Dad
[William J. Buchanan] was still Supervisor and
the store had a little small store in back of it,
it's all connected, and that's where Bud opened
his realty building. It's still there.

[The Buchanan Department Store closed
in 1949. The building then housed Klein's
Department Store.]

Gibbons: And what street is that on?

Buchanan: And grandma, grandpa had
a office, supervisor's office in back of that

building, of Bud's realty store. That's where all
he did the county business.

Gibbons: And so that was...was that Fifth and
Black Diamond [in Pittsburg]?

Buchanan: After he passed away is when they
sold the store. Bud sold it. Bud and Norine
owned it after grandpa died.

[W. J. Buchanan died in 1950. According
to two different sources, the store closed in
February 1949.]

Pease: When did they move into the Fifth
Street, where it was Service Hardware? When
did they get that?

Buchanan: Do what?

Pease: Ooma, the real estate on Fifth, Fifth
Street next to Auntie Grace's Hardware Store.
Was that the same time?

Buchanan: Oh, when they sold the store,
Grandpa let Ed have the next...oh well it was a
little building where Bud had his office. And
then there was an alley and then there was a
store. And, the two boys and them butchers in
the other store, grandpa let him rent half of it.
And the other half, Ed and Harold rented for a
hardware store.

Pease: Harold McGlashan and Ed Parent.

Buchanan: And then, the two butchers
couldn't get along. They sold out and the
hardware store took the whole thing. That's
where it is today.

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[The store was called Service Hardware and was located at 45 E Fifth Street in Pittsburg. Harold McGlashan and Ed Parent were friends and neighbors and worked in the store together.]

Gibbons: Did you have anything else you wanted to share? Do you have anything else you'd like to tell me?

Buchanan: No. I think you've got the works. It's all in a half a dozen [newspapers], uh ...even to this point. Two years ago my girl [Buchanan is referring to her caretaker.], we went to the cemetery on Memorial Day. And the policeman there knew us and he let us have a parking place. And I got out and there was a young man standing there with a camera and he, I guess knew who I was, I don't know. He said to Ettie May, "Could I take your picture?" I said, "No." Everybody in this town has taken my picture. So he didn't...I don't think he took it that I ever saw. But he went over to the headstone and took a picture of the headstone and I was watching in all of the town papers and what not to see if that...I never seen it.

Gibbons: So this is Oak View Cemetery?

[Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery is located on East 18th Street, Antioch, Contra Costa County, California.]

Buchanan: Yes.

Pease: First turn on the right.

Gibbons: Well, since you've got to go and I don't want to keep her any longer, would it

be alright if I come back another day to see if she would want to share some photographs? Would that be alright? [Gibbons speaks louder for Buchanan to hear]. I'm asking about coming back another day to look at the photos. Could I come back another day to look at the photographs?

Buchanan: Yes. Of me?

Gibbons: Of you and the family, of the old days. Would that be OK?

Pease: Yeah. Let's pull it together. Sure.

Buchanan: The whole family?

Pease: Well, you know back, uh, your family and back maybe in Berkeley and maybe some up here at the ranch. We have old photographs of the ranch. [Buchanan sighs.] Now don't make this be like the cemetery, you'll be regretting it.

[Pease jokes with her grandmother.]

Buchanan: I don't think so. If they want any pictures of all of them, I've got albums they can copy.

Pease: We'd like to come back and pull that together. OK? OK.

Buchanan: I've got pictures all over the house.

Gibbons: That's good. That's really good. The family will have all of that to treasure.

End of Interview.



P610.56.1

Nortonville, looking west, 1870s. On November 24, 1870, the *Antioch Ledger* newspaper reported that Nortonville boasted a population of 900 to 1,000 people, making it one of the largest communities in Contra Costa County. On the hill (center right) is the Nortonville School. This is most likely the school that William J. and Jennie Buchanan would have attended before there was a school in Pittsburg (known as New York Landing at the time). Waste rock piles are visible on the far left, and Lasell's Cheap Cash Store is the two-story structure in the center front.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD
Oakland Museum Collection*



P610.41.29

Main Street, Nortonville, California, looking north, *circa* 1870s. Structures on Main Street included a butcher shop, a barbershop, a boardinghouse, a lodging house, and the Knights of Pythias Hall. A fire in June 1878 destroyed much of Main Street. The fire started in Noakes butcher shop on June 20, 1878, and destroyed 14 buildings.

By 1878, William J. and Jennie Buchanan were no longer attending school in Nortonville. They were attending a school that had been established in nearby New York Landing (now called Pittsburg).

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD
George Vivian Collection*

Nortonville.

It is sad to visit a town in the throes of dissolution that so short a time ago was so proud and prosperous as Nortonville was. Goldsmith in his "Deserted Village" has immortalized the said picture, and yet we do not believe he ever saw a village quite so forlorn and hopeless as Nortonville is now. The few inhabitants still remaining are hopelessly stranded, with no possibility of relief, else they too would quietly steal away. Unfortunately the sturdy miners cannot fold their tents about them when they steal away, but must go hence, naked as they came, leaving substantial houses and beautiful homes behind. Some of the more fortunate, who have snatched a few dimes from dame fortune, are able to wash the grim and black coal dust from their faces, and are taking their houses to pieces, moving to greener pastures and rebuilding. And yet it is a sad sight to witness this decay and dissolution of a town once so proud and prosperous. Somersville, its twin neighbor, is a trifle better situated. Here the Rankin mine is in full operation, and things still look prosperous. Just now, however, the outlook for coal is not very bright, but it is only a question of time when fuel will be fuel, and the coal miner will be on top again.—*Ledger*.

This newspaper article, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 10, 1885, describes Nortonville as "forlorn and hopeless." In 1885, the Black Diamond Mine in Nortonville, the largest mine in the Mount Diablo Coal Field, ceased operation. Many miners and their families followed the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company from Nortonville to Washington Territory to mine the newly discovered, and better quality, coal there. As this article states, they left behind "substantial houses and beautiful homes." Other structures were taken in pieces to "greener pastures" to be rebuilt.

In the 1870s, various sources reported Nortonville as the largest town in Contra Costa County.



P610.164.2

This photograph, of the west side of Somersville, Contra Costa County, California, was taken in 1878. Rose Hill Cemetery can be seen on the hill in the upper right portion of the picture. Over the hill, past the cemetery, was the community of Nortonville. Tracks from the Pittsburg Railroad run on the waste rock from the Pittsburg Mine.

Somersville was the second largest town in the Mount Diablo Coal Field. Three other communities existed east of Somersville. They were called Stewartville, West Hartley, and Judsonville.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD
Phoebe Hearst Museum, U. C. Berkley Collection*

REPORT of the New York school for month ending May 23d. Whole number of days' attendance, 829½; whole number of days' absence, 131; whole number of tardinesses, 72; total number enrolled, 59. Roll of Honor. Clarisse Senderman, Jennie Buchanan, Willie Buchanan, Abe Johnson, Sarah Senderman, John McGrath, John Dolan, Willie Dolan, Lizzie Hill, Byard Cantrill, Joseph Nichols, Theresa McGee, Bernard Senderman, Shara Skudera, Katie Dolan, Lizzie McGee, Maggaie McCue, Nellie Dolan, Josephine Junter.
ELISE M. ASMUS, Teacher.

The newspaper article, on the left, is from the *Antioch Ledger*, May 31, 1879. It gives the "Report of the New York school for month ending May 23d." Listed on the "Roll of Honor" are Jennie Buchanan and Willie Buchanan, the children of William and Catherine Buchanan.

According to information provided by Vince Ferrante of the Pittsburg Historical Society, the first schoolhouse in New York Landing was built in 1874. The Buchanan children first attended school in Nortonville because no school existed in New York Landing (now called Pittsburg) at the time.

The article on the right, from the *Antioch Ledger*, September 7, 1889, reports the accident of Mr. Buchanan.

The 1880 *United States Census for Nortonville Precinct, Contra Costa County, California* lists William Buchanan, age 54, and his occupation as farmer. Also recorded are his wife, Catherine, age 46, and their children, Jenney [sic], age 17 and William, age 13.

The census for Nortonville Precinct included the ranch area where the Buchanan family lived.

SOMERVILLE ITEMS

A great many people have been coming to town lately. What's the matter? A boom must have struck the town as all the houses are again being occupied.

Mr. Rankin has just completed the work of erecting an engine at the old Davis slope. They are going down the old slope for a new supply of coal. What's the matter with the shaft?

An accident occurred last week which might have resulted seriously. Mr. Buchanan was coming down the hill from the Nortonville side, when the horses became unmanageable and he was thrown from the wagon. He was taken to the residence of Mrs. F. Davis, where he was cared for. INNOCENCE.

Pictured is Catherine Buchanan. No date. Catherine was the wife of William Buchanan and mother of W. J. Buchanan and Norine (Buchanan) Syme. She was born in Scotland in 1833.

Courtesy of the Pittsburg Historical Society



P610.477.3

OLD RESIDENT

Mrs. Catherine Buchanan died Thursday night at the home of her daughter, Mrs. James Simms, who resides south of Cornwall. The deceased was an old resident of this county and aged 75 years. There are left one daughter, Mrs. J. Simms and a son, Supervisor William Buchanan of Black Diamond. Also a sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Graves of this place. The funeral services will be held tomorrow, Sunday, at the residence, south of Cornwall and the burial is to take place in the Buchanan lot in the Masons' and Odd Fellows' Cemetery at this place.

The death of Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan, wife of William Buchanan, is reported in this newspaper article from the *Antioch Ledger*, January 15, 1910. The last name of her daughter, Jeanette (Mrs. James Syme) is incorrectly spelled as "Simms." The Masons' and Odd Fellows' Cemetery is now known as Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery. It is located on East 18th Street in Antioch, California.

Cornwall (mentioned in the article) was a small settlement that existed near a railroad station slightly south of New York Landing (now called Pittsburg).

ANOTHER PIONEER PASSES AWAY.

MRS. KATHERINE BUCHANAN,
MOTHER OF SUPERVISOR W. J.
BUCHANAN, PASSES AWAY AT
HOME OF HER SON IN BLACK
DIAMOND THURSDAY NIGHT,
JANUARY 13th—RESIDENT OF
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FORTY
YEARS.

At the age of 75 years and 6 months, the beloved mother of Supervisor W. J. Buchanan passed away at the home of her son in Black Diamond last night. Mrs. Buchanan was born in Perthshire, Scotland, coming to this country in her girlhood. She had been a resident of Contra Costa county for forty years. The funeral services will be held on Sunday morning, January 16th, at 11 o'clock, from the residence of her son. The interment will be made at the cemetery in Antioch.

LAID TO REST

The funeral services of the late Catherine Buchanan, who passed away at the Symes home south of Cornwall last Friday, were held at the residence of her son, W. J. Buchanan, at Black Diamond, last Sunday, Rev. Cook of Oakland, officiating. The interment was in the Masons' and Odd Fellows' Cemetery at this place, and a very large number of friends and acquaintances attended the funeral services and the burial ceremonies. Born in Perth, Scotland, Mrs. Buchanan came to this country with her husband, forty-five years ago, locating first in Placer County. From there they removed to Antioch and later to the home place south of Cornwall, where she resided ever since. The deceased was a noble, earnest Christian woman, loved by all, and will be mourned by a large circle of friends.

These two newspaper articles report the death of Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan, the wife of William Buchanan. The newspaper article on the left, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, January 22, 1910, incorrectly spells her first name as Katherine with a "K." The article on the right, reporting her funeral services, is from the *Antioch Ledger*, January 22, 1910.

Pictured is William Buchanan, the husband of Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan and father of William J. Buchanan and Jeanette "Jennie" Buchanan. No date.

According to his gravestone at Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery on East 18th Street, Antioch, California, Buchanan was born in 1826 and died in 1904. Cemetery records record his date of death as March 15, 1904.

The 1880 U. S. Federal Census for Nortonville Precinct, lists William Buchanan as a farmer and native of Scotland. His wife, Catherine, is also listed as a native of Scotland.

The 1900 U. S. Federal Census for New York Precinct states that William was born in January 1826. He immigrated to the United States with his wife in 1856. According to the census record, the couple was married for 41 years at the time of enumeration, making their wedding year about 1859. William Buchanan was approximately 78 years of age at the time of his death.

Courtesy of the
Pittsburg Historical Society

In the matter of the estate of William Buchanan, deceased. Decree distributing lots 1 and 2 and the south half of the northeast quarter of section 29, T 2 N, R 1 E, containing 162.41 acres; cash \$1266.61; five head of horses and farming implements; to Katherine C. Buchanan one half; to Jennie C. Syme and Wm. J. Buchanan, one fourth each.

This article, regarding the estate of William Buchanan, is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, May 9, 1908.



P610.477.6



P610.479.2

Pictured above is Jennie Buchanan. No date. The photograph was taken by J. H. Peters studio on 914 Market Street in San Francisco, California.

Right, Jeanette “Jennie” (Buchanan) and James Syme. No date. The photograph was taken by a studio on 1148 Market Street in San Francisco, California.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD
Buchanan Family Collection*

The article, below, regarding the marriage of James Syme to Jennie Buchanan, is from an unknown and undated source. The 1910 U. S. *Federal Census, Township 6, Contra Costa County, California*, states that James and Jennie Symes have been married for five years at the time of the census, making their marriage year *circa* 1915.

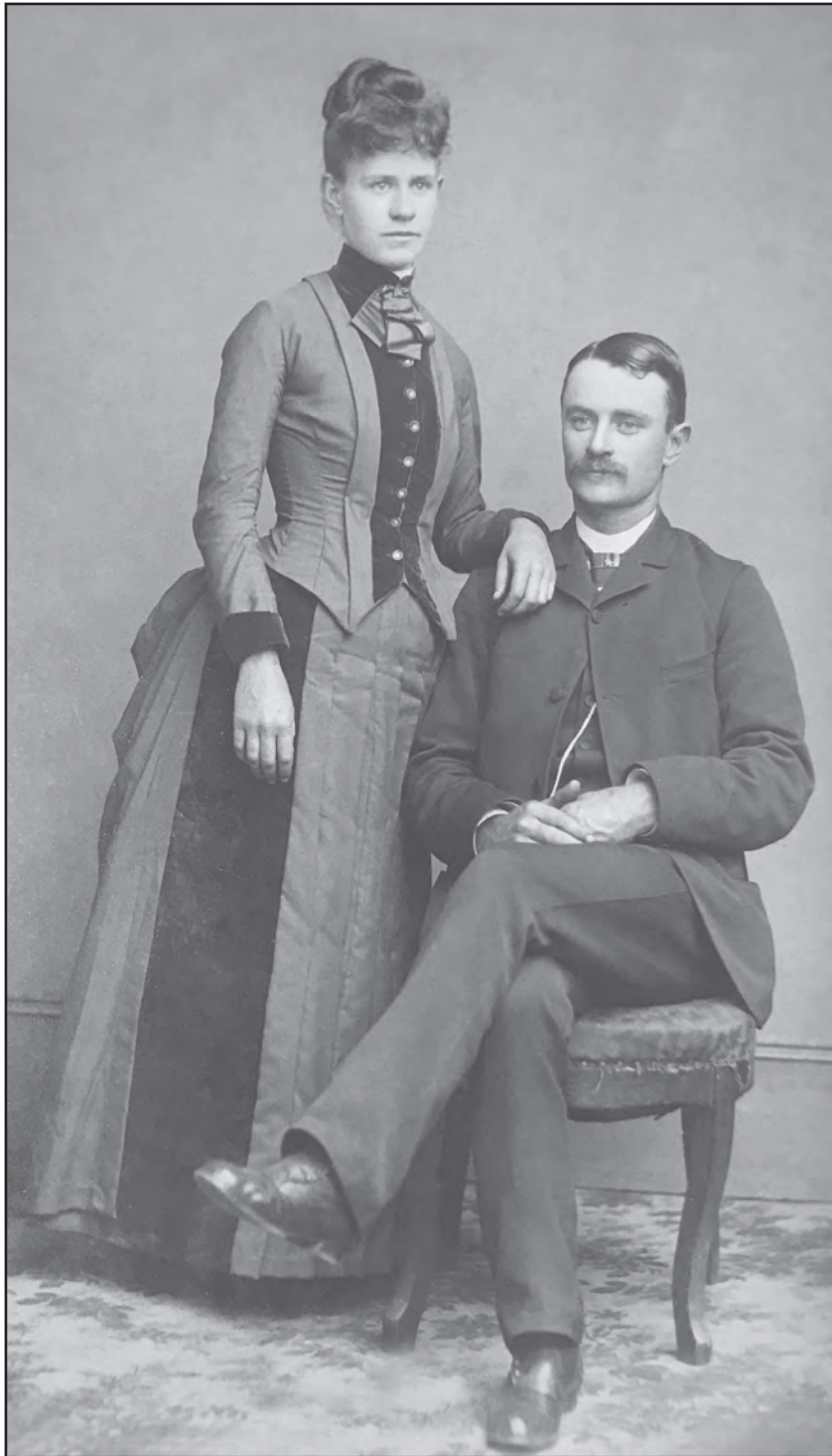
Syme-Buchanan.

James Syme and Miss Jennie Buchanan were married last Sunday at the home of Mrs. William Buchanan, near Black Diamond. The ceremony was performed by Rev. J. M. Barnhart, of Antioch, in the presence of a few immediate relatives and friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Syme will make their home for the present on the Buchanan place. They are both well known and highly esteemed here and have the best wishes of the community.



P610.479.3



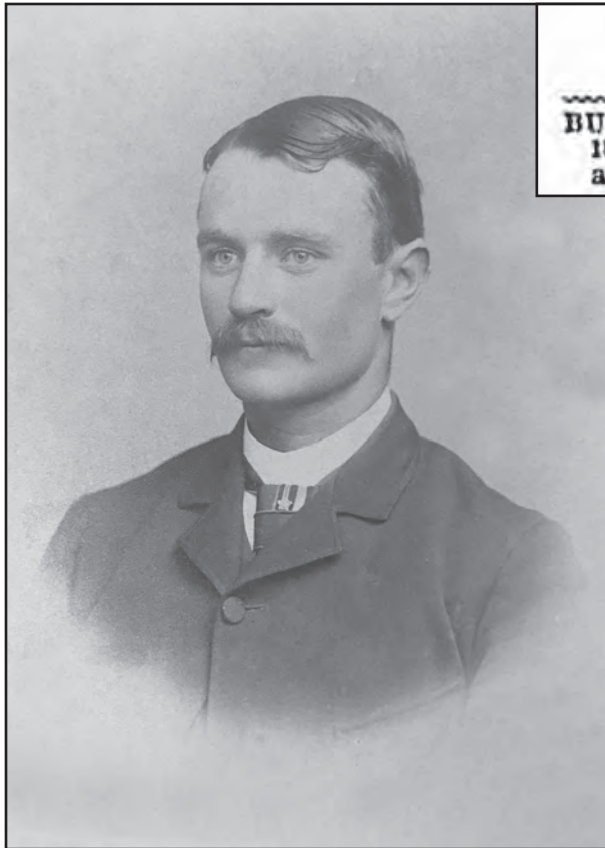
P610.477.2

Jeanette "Jennie" and
William J. Buchanan, the
children of William and
Catherine (Campbell)
Buchanan. No date.

Jennie Buchanan was born
July 16, 1863. She married
James Syme *circa* 1905.

William J. Buchanan was
born September 11, 1867.
He married Nora Carroll in
1893.

*Courtesy of the
Pittsburg Historical Society*



P610.477.9

Married.

BUCHANAN-CARROLL-In Martinez, Jan. 4,
1893, Mr W. J. Buchanan of Black Diamond
and Miss Nora Carroll of Concord.

The newspaper article, above, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, January 7, 1893, announces the marriage of William J. Buchanan to Nora Carroll. Notice that at the time of their marriage, the name New York Landing had changed to Black Diamond.

William J. Buchanan (above) and his wife, Nora (Carroll) Buchanan, pictured on the right. No dates.

Nora was first postmistress for the community and held the position for 14 years. The post office was located in the Buchanan's store.

Courtesy of the Pittsburg Historical Society



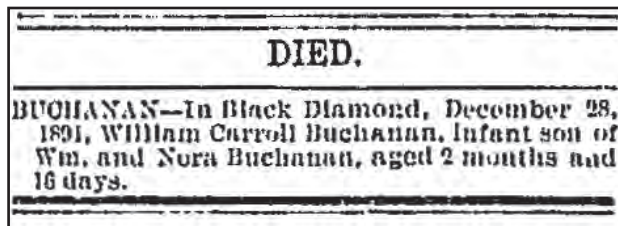
P610.477.4



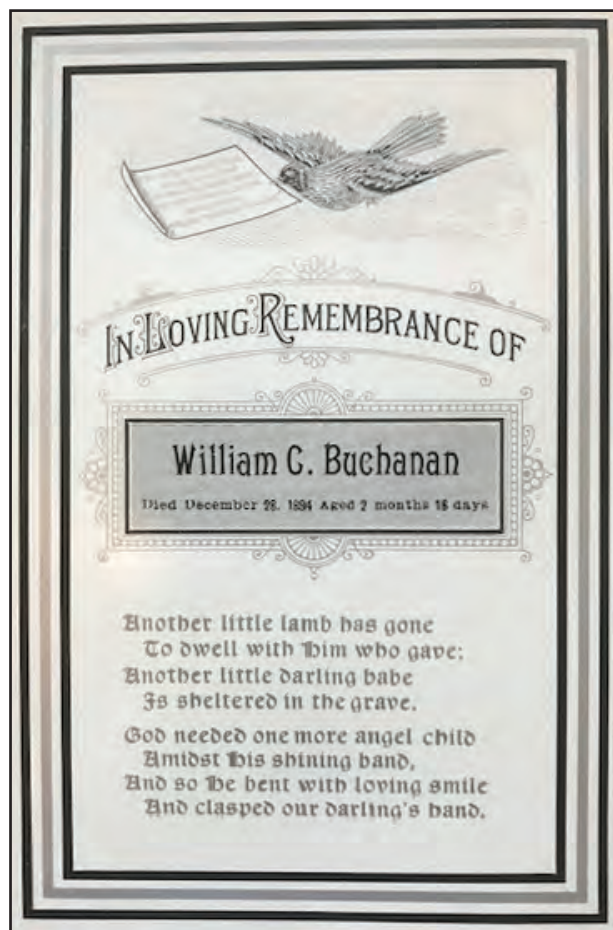
P610.479.1

William James Buchanan and his wife, Nora (Carroll) Buchanan. No date. The photograph was taken by Theo C. Marceau, Fotografer [sic] Market Street, San Francisco, California.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD
Buchanan Family Collection*



The newspaper article (left) from the *Antioch Ledger*, January 5, 1895, announces the death of William J. and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan's first child, an infant son named William Carroll Buchanan. The baby died on December 28, 1894, at age 2 months and 16 days. The Buchanan's would have two other children: Warren G. "Bud," born May 11, 1898; and Norine, born October 28, 1900.



P610.479.10

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD
Buchanan Family Collection*



Above, the gravestone of William C. Buchanan, the infant son of William J. and Nora Buchanan. The infant died on December 28, 1894, at the age of two months and 16 days. He is buried in the Buchanan family plot at Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery in Antioch, California. Photograph by Traci Gibbons, 2021.

Pictured, left, is the memorial card "In Loving Remembrance of William C. Buchanan."

This announcement of births is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, April 22, 1899. The last entry records the birth of Ruth Simpson to E. C. [sic] and Mamie (Hewitt) Simpson.

Ruth Buchanan stated that her father's middle initial was an "E" and not a "C" as reported in this article.

BORN
~~~~~  
**McHARRY**—At McHarry's Ranch, April 17, 1899, to the wife of D. McHarry, a daughter.  
**CAKEBREAD**—On Marsh Creek, April 11, 1899, to the wife of William Cakebread, a son.  
**DALEY**—In Somersville, April 6, 1899, to the wife of Peter Daley, a daughter.  
**SIMPSON**—In Crockett April 13, 1899, to the wife of E. C. Simpson, a daughter.



P610.479.5

Above, E. E. Simpson, the father of Ruth Lorraine Simpson. No date. Right, Ruth as a baby in 1898. The image on the right was taken by Horace E. Hunt studio in Crockett, California.

*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.4

October.

4—To the wife of D. H. Carpenter, a daughter  
—near Oakley.

11—To the wife of Peter Daley, a daughter—  
in Somersville,

28—To the wife of William J. Buchanan, a  
daughter—in Black Diamond.

28—To the wife of William McDaniels, a  
daughter—near Cornwall.

Shown as the third entry in this article is the birth of a daughter to William J. and Nora Buchanan. The daughter born on October 28, was Norine Buchanan. The newspaper article is from the *Antioch Ledger*, January 5, 1900.

Pictured on the right are the children of William J. and Nora Buchanan; Norine with her older brother, Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.11





P610.479.12

Left, Thanksgiving day 1902 at the Buchanan Ranch. Pictured are children Norine and Warren "Bud" Buchanan and what appears to be their Aunt Jennie (Buchanan) Syme behind them.

Below, two undated photographs of a young Warren "Bud" Buchanan.

*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.8



P610.479.9

Full information concerning town property may be had from M. CODY, Agent, at his office in the bank building, East Third street, Black Diamond. Office House: 9 to 12, Wednesday and Friday.

When I married, uh, the family lived upstairs over the store on Black Diamond [Street]. And we lived out on Eleventh and Black Diamond [Pittsburg]. And we wanted to build a house of our own and the family were gonna sell...are gonna move the store to Railroad [Railroad Avenue in Pittsburg]. Build this big store. So we bought lots from Hooper, three lots—



P610.337.1

Students pose in front of the Nortonville school in the 1880s. In 1866, when school began in Nortonville under the tuition of D. S. Woodruff, the original building was situated on the west side of town near the Black Diamond shaft. Four years later, the school was moved to the location known as School Hill.

According to the *History of Contra Costa County, California*, published by W. A. Slocum and Company, in 1882, the school “developed into a seminary with four departments, the school being maintained, chiefly, by a charge of one per cent on all moneys paid through the Superintendent’s office.”

This is most likely the school that William J. Buchanan and his sister, Janette “Jennie” Buchanan attended before any schools existed in New York Landing (later called Black Diamond and now called Pittsburg). By 1879, they were attending school in New York Landing. See newspaper article from the *Antioch Ledger*, May 31, 1879, on page 35.

*Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society*





P610.107.4

**SUPERVISORS' PROCEEDINGS.**

The Board of Supervisors held a meeting on April 17 and the following business disposed of:

Pursuant to notice given by the board, J. H. Trythall, chairman of the board, offered the Poor Farm for sale to the highest bidder for cash. The highest bid received was \$55 per acre and the chairman rejected all bids.

In the matter of lapsing of Carbondale School District, the Board declared Carbondale School District lapsed and annexed the territory formerly known as Carbondale School District to Somersville School District, and ordered that the property now in school building and the school house be placed in charge of Supervisor W. J. Buchanan.

In the matter of the application of the Black Diamond School District to withdraw from Riverside Union High School District. Upon motion of Supervisor Buchanan, the Board orders that no action be taken on the petition of the Black Diamond School District to withdraw from Riverside Union High School District.

The Carbondale School in Nortonville, circa 1905. This school was located near Kirker Creek.

The newspaper article on the left, from the *Antioch Ledger*, April 22, 1905, reported that the Carbondale School District had lapsed and responsibility for the school and its contents were subsequently transferred to the Somersville School District. The "property now in school building and the school house be placed in charge of Supervisor W. J. Buchanan."

*Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society*



P610.479.55

Left, a school desk from the Nortonville School, most likely the Carbondale School, in possession of Ruth Buchanan's granddaughter, Laurie (Buchanan) Pease. As stated in the 1905 *Antioch Ledger* newspaper article on the previous page: The "property now in school building and the school house be placed in charge of Supervisor W. J. Buchanan." Photograph by Traci Gibbons, October 2021.

Right, a school keepsake from William J. "Willie" Buchanan. The document says:

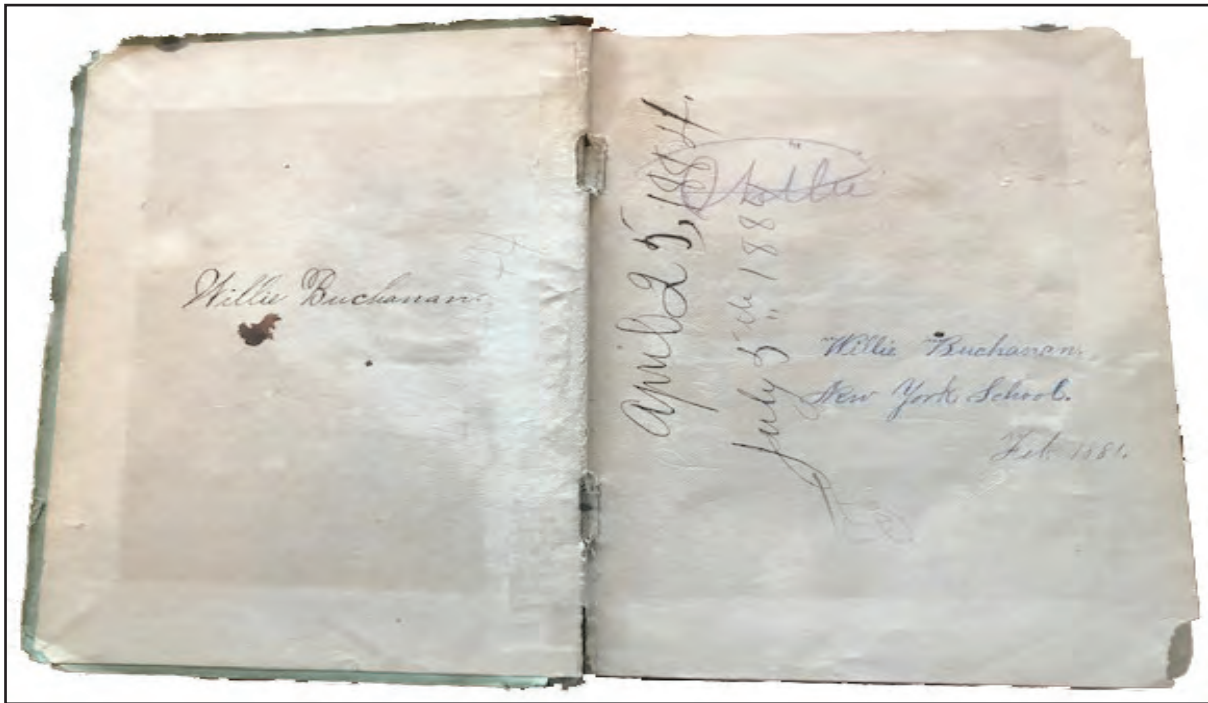
"Willie Buchanan from his teacher Miss B. Jorey, 1877." It also states that it is for "Perfect Recitation." Miss Bessie Jorey was a school teacher in the New York Landing School in the 1870s. Photograph by Traci Gibbons, October 2021.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

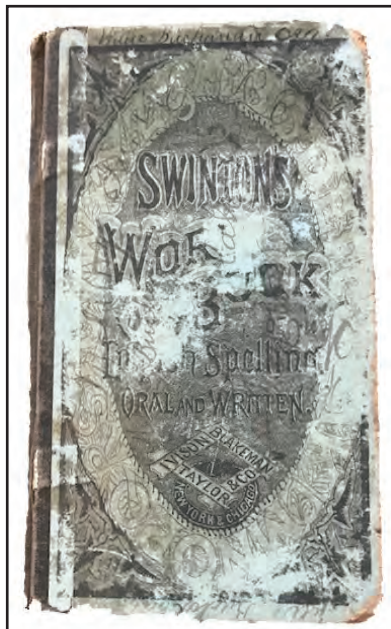


P610.479.54





P610.479.53



P610.479.52

A school book from the New York School at New York Landing (now Pittsburg), in the possession of Laurie (Buchanan) Pease. The book is titled: *Swinton's Word Book of English Spelling Oral and Written*. The inside cover is inscribed "Willie Buchanan, New York School, Feb. 1881." Photographs by Traci Gibbons, October 2021.

Prior to attending school at New York Landing, Buchanan and his sister attended school in Nortonville. The *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper, March 15, 1945, page 9, shares one of Buchanan's school memories.

He went to school at Nortonville and recalls walking four miles each way to and from school. One time when he and his sister were riding a pony to school, a few cows were crossing the road. The impetuous pony leaped at one of them, knocking it down and landing safely with the two children, and proceeded on as usual.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.477.1

The first Buchanan store opened in 1896 and was located at First and York Streets in New York Landing (now Pittsburg). The sign on the building says “Cash Store.” No date.

In the book, *Days Gone By*, Volume 1, by Nilda Rego, published by the Contra Costa County Historical Society in 1987, page 104 it states:

In New York Landing, Billy and Nora [William J. and Nora Buchanan] set up housekeeping on the family farm. Nora didn’t like farm life all that much. She preferred working in town rather than on the farm.

In 1896 Joseph Raney, who had been operating a store in New York Landing, decided to sell. Nora [Buchanan] wanted the store. She could run it herself and Billy could keep working on the farm.

She convinced her husband. He borrowed \$1,000 and bought Raney’s store on First and York Streets. A big painted sign spread across the wooden building simply stated, “Cash Store.”

*Courtesy of the Pittsburg Historical Society*

#### BUCHANAN THE MAN.

W. J. Buchanan, Republican nominee for Supervisor of the Fourth district, has the first and best qualifications coveted by every man who is called upon to go before the people as a candidate for a high and responsible position of public trust—the implicit confidence and high esteem of the people of the community in which he resides. This prerequisite Mr. Buchanan enjoys to a marked degree, irrespective of party affiliation.

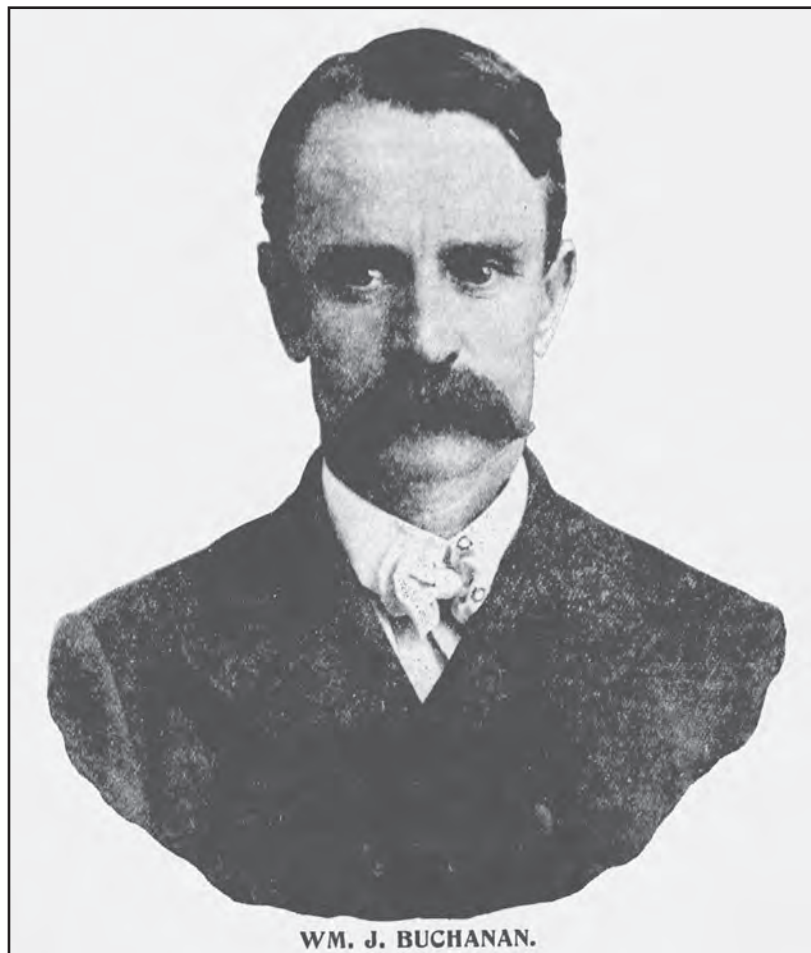
It is known in Black Diamond and conceded throughout the district, by those not prejudiced by desire, that he will receive a very large majority of the votes that will be cast in his thriving and rapidly growing town, numerous Democrats being numbered among his enthusiastic supporters.

In the Somersville country he is also a very popular man and in and around Clayton he will secure a large vote.

As a Supervisor no one questions but that he will prove a careful, painstaking, honest and progressive servant of the people of the Fourth district and of the whole county. He is not the kind of man to consent blindly to proposed measure for public improvement but will exercise the same careful consideration which has governed his career as a successful business man. His election is a certainty, but his own efforts and those of his multitude of friends will be continued up to the time when the last votes shall be polled on election day in order to roll up an overwhelming majority.

This article, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 22, 1904, states:

“In the Somersville country he is also a very popular man and in and around Clayton he will secure a large vote.”



This image, of William J. Buchanan, appeared in the *Contra Costa Gazette* on November 12, 1904, page 5.



## **BUCHANAN OF BLACK DIAMOND**

**Election Assured by  
Big Majority.--Op-  
position Small.**

**Taxpayers Turning to Him  
for Relief from Unneces-  
sary Public Expense**

William J. Buchanan is the coming Supervisor of the Fourth district. It has come to be thoroughly understood that his election means a revolution in the management of the affairs of the county; a return to economical and businesslike methods.

Through strict adherence to business methods, a high regard for honor and steadfastness of purpose Mr. Buchanan has acquired that fitness for the discharge of public affairs which has been so noticeably lacking in the county legislature during the past few years. He has resided in his district during his whole life and is thoroughly familiar with every foot of its territory and can be depended upon to distribute the funds at his command with absolute impartiality.

A rigidly conservative checking up of the registration of the Fourth district shows conclusively that Mr. Buchanan will be elected by a safe majority and the whole county will heartily rejoice over the change.

This newspaper article, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, November 5, 1904, page 1, regarding the election of William J. Buchanan as Supervisor of the Fourth District of Contra Costa County states:

"It has come to be thoroughly understood that his election means a revolution in the management of the affairs of the county: a return to economical and businesslike methods."

The article ends by stating:

"A rigidly conservative checking up of the registration of the Fourth district show conclusively that Mr. Buchanan will be elected by a safe majority and the whole county will heartily rejoice over the change."

William J. Buchanan served as Contra Costa County Supervisor from 1904–1950.

## **WM. J. BUCHANAN**

**Announces himself as a candidate for**

### **Supervisor District 1**

**Subject to the decision of the Republican  
County Convention to be held at Black  
Diamond, September 28th.**

This advertisement, announcing William J. Buchanan as a candidate for Supervisor District 1 of Contra Costa County, comes from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, September 17, 1904, page 5.



P610.469.2

#### AGAIN CHAIRMAN

Monday being the beginning of the new term of office for Supervisors Trythall, Buchanan and Casey, they organized at their meeting Tuesday by re-electing Supervisor J. H. Trythall chairman. Mr. Trythall appointed the committees as follows: Finance—Buchanan and Hook; Hospital—Casey and Knott.

Courtesy of the  
Contra Costa County Historical Society

Pictured are members of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, *circa* 1914. Left to right are: Judge Casey (Port Costa), William J. Buchanan (standing, Pittsburg), John Trythall (Antioch), Vincent Hook (standing, Concord), and Zeb Knott (Richmond).

One of the gratifying results of the election in this county, was the re-election of J. H. Trythall and W. J. Buchanan. Of course there was no question from the beginning regarding the former's success, as he could have overcome the combined strength of any two men in his district, but strong work was done against Buchanan. The return of these two staunch representatives, who have done so much for the county, not only in improvements, but by reducing our tax rate, demonstrates the voters appreciation of their work.

Buchanan was elected as a Contra Costa County Supervisor in 1903 and held the position until his death on October 6, 1950. He held the office for 47 years. John Trythall worked in the Mount Diablo Coal Field as a miner and lived in the coal mining town of Judsonville in 1880. By 1900, he was a coal mine superintendent living in Antioch, California.

The newspaper article, above left, is from the *Antioch Ledger*, January 6, 1917. The newspaper article, bottom left, is from the *Antioch Ledger*, November 7, 1908.



**WOULD CHANGE NAME  
OF BLACK DIAMOND.**

A move has been started in Black Diamond to change the name of the town to one which will give the world a better idea of what the place really is. "Black diamond" is a common name for coal and the town received its name many years ago when the coal mines were in operation in and around Nortonville and Somersville. Now the mines have been closed down and there are no more "black diamonds" in this county so the people of that hustling community are casting about for another name for their town. A strong point which is being urged is that neither the Santa Fe or Southern Pacific Railroad have stations by the name of Black Diamond.

The newspaper article, on the left, is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, January 28, 1911. In the book, *Images of America, Pittsburg*, by Marti Aiello, Arcadia Publishing, 2004, page 15, it states: "The names New York of the Pacific, New York Landing, Junction, Cornwall, Black Diamond, and Pittsburg were all associated with this area at one time or another."

Pictured below is a postcard view of Black Diamond's (now Pittsburg) main street with the store owned by Buchanan on the right. The postcard is postmarked October 1912. The view is looking south. The store was located on the corner of Black Diamond and Second Streets. The Buchanan family lived above the store in the upstairs quarters.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Gary Wiard Palmer Collection*

**Main St., Black Diamond, Cal.**



P610.475.1



P610.477.10

This view of the Buchanan's store was taken looking west. No date. The front of the store faced the main street in Pittsburg (now called Railroad Avenue). This was the second Buchanan store. The first Buchanan store can be seen on page 52. In 1906, William and Catherine Buchanan moved their store business to First and Black Diamond Streets. During the interview, Buchanan stated:

W. J. Buchanan, who purchased the Black Diamond hotel property, will remodel the building when he takes charge and then remove with the postoffice and his grocery store into it. The property has a frontage of about seventy feet and fifty deep, and the price paid is reported to be nearly \$3000.

*Antioch Ledger*  
February 22, 1902

And it was a lovely big store and nice living quarters upstairs. Had a big living room and a bay window looked off onto the river and a big dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms. Nice living. Bud and I lived there with them for close to a year while our house was being built on Twelfth Street [in Pittsburg].

*Courtesy of the Pittsburg Historical Society*



**PITTSBURG WILL SOON  
BE POSTOFFICE NAME**

According to dispatches received at Black Diamond the name of the postoffice there is after July 1st to be changed to Pittsburg. Both of the railroads have changed the name of their stations to Pittsburg from Diamond and Cornwall and all that remains to make the change complete is the authorization of Uncle Sam.

These articles regard the name change from Black Diamond to Pittsburg in 1911. The article above, is from the *Daily Gazette*, June 17, 1911, page 3. The article, on the right, is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, August 5, 1911, page 3.

The *Post Dispatch* newspaper, November 9, 1972, reported on the various names to the community over the years. According to the article, the city of Black Diamond incorporated in 1903. The name was changed from Black Diamond to Pittsburg in 1911 to reflect the industrial growth of the community.

The article states that the major names and periods are:

New York of the Pacific, 1849  
New York Landing, 1868  
Black Diamond, 1895  
Pittsburg, 1911

**POSTOFFICE KNOWN  
AS PITTSBURG  
IN FUTURE**

**ORDERS FROM POSTAL DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCE CHANGE IN NAME OF THE TOWN OF BLACK DIAMOND.**

It is "Pittsburg" now.

On Saturday morning Postmaster Frank L. Glass received official notice from the Postoffice department that as far as that branch of the government is concerned Black Diamond no longer exists and in the future that thriving little town of the sixth class which was incorporated in 1903 will be known and hailed as Pittsburg. All mail will be addressed to Pittsburg and as the pouches will be sent to that town letters, papers and communications should also be addressed as above.

Some time ago an election was held in the town of Black Diamond at which the people by an overwhelming vote decided to change the name of their town to Pittsburg. A little later the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe companies changed the names of their stations from Cornwall and Diamond to Pittsburg and lastly comes word from the postal department that Pittsburg succeeds Black Diamond on the department roll of offices. The move to change the name was started when the travel to that town became large and as neither of the railroad stations were known by the town's name the people decided the change the name of their town and have all the same.



**SEASONABLE  
GOODS**

It is our aim to keep our stock up to date in every department. We have all the new lines in DRY GOODS, SHOES, HATS and GROCERIES. Our effort to keep our business up and abreast of the times has earned for us the title of pacemakers for this community.

**W. J. Buchanan**

*Pittsburg Dispatch*  
November 20, 1917

Call and inspect our  
New Line of

**Ladies' and Gents' Hosiery  
Summer Silks and Fancy Waists**

We are Agents for the  
**Royal Worcester Corset**  
NONE BETTER

**W. J. Buchanan**

*Pittsburg Post*  
July 12, 1918

These advertisements, for Buchanan's Department Store, appeared in the local Pittsburg newspapers.

**BUCHANAN'S**

... PRESENT ...

**THE NEWEST IN SHIRTS**

No Starch, No Wilt Collar. Here is the shirt every man has wished for—a dressy firm collar always comfortable and smooth.

SEE THE FISH BOWL TEST  
IN THE WINDOW

**Better Shirt Days are Here**

in Patterns **1.50** **1.95** in White

A special shirt event for Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Men's collar attached shirts, color fast, shrunk. New Spring Shades 14½ to 17

**Buchanan's**  
DEPARTMENT STORE  
5th and Railroad St. PHONE 22

*Pittsburg Post Dispatch*  
March 20, 1935

**W. J. BUCHANAN**  
**General Merchandise**

Telephone Main 221      Pittsburg, Calif.

The advertisement, above, comes from the *History and Directory of The Pittsburg Congregational Church, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California*, January 1913. The pastor of the church at the time was Reverend W. H. Cooke.

**DEPARTMENT STORES**

**Buchanan's**  
**Department Store**

*House of Quality*

Established 1896

**5th and Railroad**

**Pittsburg**

**Telephone 22**

From the *Polk's Pittsburg and Antioch (California) City Directory, 1931*, Vol. One, page 27, R. L. Polk & Co. of California, Publishers, San Francisco.

**MORTIMORE-SPRINGETT**  
**Christmas Chimes and Wedding**  
**Bells Peal Forth**

On Christmas morning a pretty wedding ceremony was solemnized in the parlors of the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Buchanan, when Miss Anna Springett and Mr. William Mortimore were joined together in the holy bonds of wedlock, the Rev. Chas. H. C. Jackson tying the nuptial knot.

The bride had been housekeeper in the Buchanan home for more than a year, and the groom has been employed as clerk for Mr. Buchanan since—well, we do not know how long, but some one says Billy Mortimore has been at the store ever since he can remember, and that is away back.

So the wedding was a sort of homey affair, with Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan acting as sponsors for both parties.

The bride is an estimable lady and is the sister of Mrs. H. Berberick and Mrs. C. Straub of this city.

William Mortimore is one of Pittsburg's most substantial young men, and is favorably known throughout this section of the county and state.

Immediately following the ceremony the newlyweds left for Colusa county to visit relatives, and will return the first of the new year to establish a home here, and receive the well wishes of a host of friends.

From the *Pittsburg Post* newspaper, January 1, 1921, page 1. During his life, W. J. Buchanan was in close contact with many former residents of the Mount Diablo Coal Field. Some he employed in his store.

This article describes the wedding of William Mortimore to Anna Springett. Mortimore once lived in the coal mining community of Somersville and was an employee of the Buchanan store since its beginning. As this article states, Mortimore was employed as a clerk in the store. His bride, Anna Springett, "had been a housekeeper in the Buchanan home for more than a year."

The Buchanans and Mortimores must have had a very close friendship since the wedding took place in the Buchanan home on Christmas morning.

The article states, "William Mortimore is one of Pittsburg's most substantial young men, and is favorably known throughout this section of the county and state." For more information on William Mortimore see page v of the *Preface*.



## **WORKING ON NEW ROAD**

### **Grading Work Commenced on Short Cut to Pittsburg.**

Supervisor W. J. Buchanan of the Fourth District, has several teams engaged in cutting and filling the hills between this place and the Standard Oil Station at Los Medanos, west of town, while others are cutting through the old coal road embankment. This is the initial move toward making a shorter road between Pittsburg and Antioch, and when completed will be much better than the present round-about way.

The road will be built north from a point directly in front of the oil station and connect with the road running east from Pittsburg in front of the Columbia Steel Works, Johnson & Lanteri's shipyard and the Bowers Rubber Works. Several fine corrugated iron culverts have also been placed along this road, that are a great improvement over the old wooden affairs.

Mr. Buchanan is improving many roads in his district, which is greatly appreciated by the people.

## **MAKING THE DIRT FLY**

### **Good Progress on the New Antioch-Pittsburg Road.**

Supervisors Trythall and Buchanan have a large force of men working on the road between this place and Pittsburg and within a very short time those who travel between those two places will be afforded a much better thoroughfare than the former highway. The filling in the low places, which will make the roadway practically level is a very decided improvement, and one certain to be appreciated by everybody. A visitor here this week stated there was a continuous cloud of dust from the road work between Antioch and Pittsburg, while both towns were "making the dirt fly" with street work and looked like substantial progress in this section of the county.

Mr. Buchanan will also make his part of the road level and as soon as the old coal road embankment near the Los Medanos oil station is removed, construction work on the other part is to be completed immediately.

These newspaper articles report on roadwork being done in Antioch and Pittsburg, California. The article on the left is from the *Antioch Ledger*, July 20, 1912. The article on the right is from the *Antioch Ledger*, July 27, 1912. As a Contra Costa County Supervisor, one of the duties of William J. Buchanan was to oversee the roadmasters, the men who would take care of and maintain the roads in Contra Costa County. Betty (Peel) Maffei, a Mount Diablo Coal Field descendant, remembers "Billy" visiting her Uncle Leyshon Lougher on the Lougher Ranch. Lougher was a roadmaster and took care of maintaining Somersville Road that led to the mining area.

## **Jan. 7 Memorable Day for Buchanan** *Starts New Term; Named Chairman; Gets Pay Raise* **Then, Oh Joy! He has New Grandson**

January 7, 1929, is a memorable day in the career of W. J. Buchanan, pioneer merchant of Pittsburg and chairman of the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors.

Four important happenings made the day eventful and one which he will not soon forget.

In the first place, Buchanan entered upon his twenty-fifth year of continuous service as a Contra Costa county supervisor; then he was elected chairman of the board for the seventh time. To make the occasion more memorable Buchanan got his first raise in official salary since he began his service on the board when, with the starting of his new term of office, he will, for the first time receive \$200-per month along with Supervisors R. J. Trembath and Oscar Olsson although C. H. Hayden and Zeb Knott, the other members of the

board have been receiving the increased compensation for the past two years.

And lastly, although most important of all the popular supervisor became a grand-dad for the first time when Mrs. Warren Buchanan, in the Alta Bates sanitarium in Berkeley presented her husband, son of the supervisor and business associate of his father, with a son.

All of which explains the more-than-usual joviality with which W. J. greeted all today. "Honored? Yes, I've been signally honored today" was Buchanan's rejoinder.

With the re-organization of the Supervisorial board and re-naming of the chairman, Supervisors C. H. Hayden and Zeb Knott were reappointed to the general finance committee while R. J. Trembath and Oscar Olsson will again comprise the hospital committee.

From the *Contra Costa Gazette*, January 7, 1929, page one. Four important happenings are reported in this article: Buchanan's 25th year of continuous service as a Contra Costa County Supervisor; his seventh time election as chairman of the board; his first raise in salary; and the birth of his first grandchild.



# WARREN BUCHANAN ENLISTS

## Not Yet 21, But Has Been Itching For Fray For Some Time

Warren, son of Supervisor and Mrs. W. J. Buchanan, has enlisted in the army and on Sunday went to Camp Fremont to enter upon the active duties of service in an ambulance corps of which he is now a member. He was accompanied by his father and mother, the trip being made by auto, Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan returning home in the evening.

Warren, who will not be twenty-one years of age until next May, has been wanting to enlist ever since the entrance of this nation into the war, but was not able to secure the consent of his parents until very recently. Now, however, that he has almost reached the age of maturity and feels irresistibly the call to the defense of the flag of his nation, Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan feel it their patriotic duty to give their consent and their blessing.

(Continued)

Warren is a bright young fellow of courteous and genial manner and is popular in an unusual degree. He has been associated with his father in the mercantile business and has shown business ability of a high order. He has had some medical training, which has in a measure, at least, prepared him for the exacting duties of the branch of the service which he has chosen, and his progress will be watched with interest by his friends.

Warren is popular in social circles not only in this city but in Antioch and other nearby towns.

The *Pittsburg Post Dispatch*, July 30, 1918, reported on the enlistment of Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan in the Army. Buchanan served during World War I. The article describes Buchanan as "a bright young fellow of courteous and genial manner and is popular in an unusual degree."

////////////////////////////////////

Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Buchanan and daughter, Miss Norine, and Mrs. Abrams and daughter, Miss Margaret, spent Sunday at Camp Fremont and had their lunch with Warren Buchanan at the mess table. Supervisor Buchanan says he boys have plenty to eat and good enough for any one.

From the *Pittsburg Dispatch*, October 1, 1918, page 8. Camp Fremont was located near Palo Alto in Santa Clara County, California.





P610.477.7

Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan, the son of William J. and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan. No date. Bud was born in 1898 and died in 1970. Bud married Ruth Lorraine Simpson in 1922 and they had one child, William E. "Bill" Buchanan, in 1929.

*Courtesy of Pittsburg Historical Society*

Right, the portrait of Warren G. "Bud"  
Buchanan was taken by Smith studio in  
Pittsburg, California. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.13



P610.479.14

The image, left, of Warren G. "Bud"  
Buchanan was taken by La Perla studio,  
Pittsburg, California. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

# **WARREN BUCHANAN MARRIED**

## **Leads Miss Ruth Simpson to Hymen's Altar Wednes- day Evening**

At the home of the bride's parents in Berkeley on Wednesday evening, Mr. Warren Buchanan of this city led to the marriage altar Miss Ruth Simpson, a charming girl and a former Pittsburg school teacher. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Jas. Muir, pastor of the Pittsburg Congregational church.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Simpson of 1936 Blake street, Berkeley, while the groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Buchanan of this city. Both bride and groom are held in high esteem in this city and are popular with the younger social set.

(Continued)

Warren Buchanan is associated with his father in the management of the W. J. Buchanan General Store, where he will continue to devote his business efforts. A home at Eleventh and Black Diamond streets has been prepared by the groom for the reception of his bride, and which they will occupy at the end of a ten days honeymoon trip into the southern part of the State.

It is said that the wedding ceremony was a most impressive one with a setting unique and beautiful.

Those in attendance from Pittsburg were Supervisor and Mrs. W. J. Buchanan, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Mortimore, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Kendall Lowes, Mrs. James Syme, John Symne, Al and Tom Becker. There were also many other friends and relatives present from Contra Costa and other points.

The *Pittsburg Post*, August 5, 1922, announced the marriage of Ruth Simpson to Warren "Bud" Buchanan. Simpson was the daughter of Edwin and Mamie (Hewitt) Simpson.

The article states: "Both bride and groom are held in high esteem in this city and are popular with the younger social set."

### **WEDDING IN BERKELEY.**

At 8:30 o'clock at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Simpson of Blake street, last evening, the marriage of Miss Ruth Simpson and Warren Buchanan, son of W. J. Buchanan of Contra Costa county, took place. Sixty relatives and friends were assembled. The home was attractive in a decoration of pink and lavender, hollyhocks, hydrangea, snapdragons and ferns forming the nuptial bower.

Rev. James Muir, pastor of the Pittsburg Congregational church, officiated.

The bride wore a gown of white lace and georgette with a bridal veil of tulle arranged at the head-dress with orange blossoms. She carried gardenias and bride's roses.

The maid of honor was Miss Dorothy Morris, who wore coral georgette and carried Ophelia roses.

Kendall Lowes served the bridegroom as best man.

The two bridesmaids were Miss Norine Buchanan, sister of the bridegroom, who was in green georgette, carrying a shower bouquet of pink sweet peas, and Miss Edna Simpson, who wore yellow georgette, an arm bouquet of orchid sweet peas, contrasting with her gown.

The couple have gone to San Diego on their honeymoon and on

(Continued)

their return will occupy an attractive bungalow in Pittsburg.

The bride is a member of the faculty of the Pittsburg grammar school.

Buchanan is manager of a large concern in Pittsburg and a veteran of the world war.

This article, regarding the wedding of Ruth Simpson to Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan, is from the *Oakland Tribune*, August 3, 1922.





*Courtesy of the Pittsburg Historical Society*

Pictured is Buchanan's Department Store located on the corner of Fifth Street and Railroad Avenue in Pittsburg. No date. In the book, *Days Gone By*, Volume 1, by Nilda Rego, published by the Contra Costa County Historical Society in 1987, page 108, it states: "In 1922 a modern store with big display windows was built on Fifth and Railroad. The Buchanan family was to operate the store from that location for the next 26 years."

The contract for the erection of the new W. J. Buchanan store building at Fifth and Railroad streets, Pittsburg, has been awarded to Seeno & Colombo, a Pittsburg firm.

*Antioch Ledger*  
August 31, 1922

Monday, March 5th, marked one of Pittsburg's greatest strides in the development of merchandising in this section. On that day W. J. Buchanan, the pioneer merchant of Pittsburg, opened his new and magnificent department store building at Fifth and Railroad streets.

*Antioch Ledger*  
March 8, 1923

These newspaper articles, from the *Antioch Ledger*, discuss the construction and opening of Buchanan's new and last store, known as Buchanan's Department Store, located at Fifth Street and Railroad Avenue in Pittsburg, California.



P610.479.41

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

Left, William J. Buchanan and his wife Nora, at the telephone switchboard inside the their store. No date. The caption written on the photograph says: "Opening of new office in building, 5th and Railroad Avenue." The image was taken by La Perla Studio of Pittsburg, California. See articles below regarding the telephone and telegraph company at the new Buchanan building.

## BUCHANAN LEASES TO PHONE COMPANY

On Monday morning a lease for a portion of the ground floor of the new Buchanan building in Pittsburg was filed running from W. J. Buchanan the popular supervisor of the Fourth district to the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. When the Buchanan building was built it was understood that the telephone company would establish its office and central switch board there and the contract has been signed and filed for the same.

*Contra Costa Gazette  
March 9, 1912*

Buchanan's new store building at the corner of Fifth and Railroad streets, Pittsburg, is nearing completion and it is expected it will be occupied within a couple of weeks. Buchanan says it will not open for business before March 1. The telephone company which will occupy a portion of the building, will take between two and three months to install the new automatic telephone apparatus, which will come with removal of the office from its present location.

*Antioch Ledger  
February 8, 1923*





P610.308.27

On the left is Buchanan's Department Store, Railroad Avenue, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California, circa 1940s. According to the article, "40 Consecutive Years in Business Provides Unique Record in City," from the *Pittsburg Independent* newspaper, August 15, 1936, pages 3 and 4: the first Buchanan store opened in 1896 in what was then known as New York Landing. It was located at the corner of First and York Streets. New York Landing eventually became known as Black Diamond and in 1906, the store was moved to a larger location at the corner of First and Black Diamond Streets. Due to the growth of the business, Buchanan gave up the management of the Telephone Company and Post Office, however they remained under the same roof. The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company remained under the same roof since the first phone was installed. In 1922, the store relocated a third time. With the need for expansion, Buchanan's moved to their final location on Fifth Street and Railroad Avenue. Buchanan's Department Store had six departments which included: men's, meat, vegetable, grocery, and household. Although the newspaper article did not specify the sixth department, former Buchanan employee, Edwin Mortimore, stated that there was also a women's apparel and yardage department.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Alice (Mortimore) Wildes Collection*



P610.479.18

Employees of Buchanan's Department Store in Pittsburg, California, celebrate the store's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September 1946. A *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper article from September 6, 1946, page 1, titled "50 Years In Business Celebrated By Buchanan" states, "For the occasion clerks are dressed in the costumes of 1896. Leg-of-mutton sleeves are much in evidence with the ladies, while the men wear suits representative of gay nineties." Buchanan opened his first store on September 5, 1896.

Pictured are first row, left to right: unknown, unknown, Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan, Augie Ramirez, Harold McGlashan, George Davis. Second row, left to right: unknown, Mike Pareno, Margaret Mountain McElhaney, Ruby Thompson, Alice Holquist, unknown, William J. Buchanan, Clem Vossos, Gertrude (Anderson) Young (former Somersville resident). Back row, left to right: unknown, Marie Davi, Lark Scudero, Carmen Pritchard, Ed Parent. Photograph by Gainsborough, Pittsburg, California.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

**For 32 Years**



—Photo by Lancaster

William J. Buchanan, for twenty-six consecutive years a member of the Contra Costa county Board of Supervisors from District No. 4, and now serving his ninth successive year as chairman of the board, is this week celebrating the thirty-second anniversary of his embarking in the mercantile business in Pittsburg (Black Diamond then).

Buchanan (he soon became "Billy" and as such his friends know him to this day), started at First and York streets in 1896 in a small store with a stock of general merchandise. Ice, coal and wood were also part of the business. The express office and postoffice were included in the store. At that time the population was only 500 and the principal industry was fishing. In 1906 the activities of the store required additional space and a move was made to Black Diamond street near First. In 1923 the present spacious store was erected on the site of what was known in the early days as the Hansen farm.

—G—

This article, regarding William J. Buchanan, appeared in the *Contra Costa Gazette*, March 5, 1929, page 1. It celebrates Buchanan's 32 years of service as a member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors from District No. 4.



## Pioneers of District Will Picnic Sunday

Old timers, who formerly lived in Somersville, Nortonville, Antioch and Pittsburg, and their families from far and near will gather at Pittsburg Park Sunday for a reunion.

Times now living only in memories of some of the oldest residents will be recalled, when the picnic is held Sunday at the Park. It will be a basket lunch, each family or party taking their own, and coffee will be served on the grounds.

There will be a program Sunday afternoon, W. J. Buchanan, who was born in Pittsburg and who for years has served as supervisor from that district, will be the master of ceremonies.

Several speakers are expected to take part and there will be other impromptu numbers. Mrs. Amy McAvoy is chairman of arrangements and everyone interested is invited to attend.

*Antioch Ledger*  
May 31, 1935

## Old Timers To Picnic In Park

The "Old Timers" of Nortonville and Somersville who can remember the fair city of Pittsburg when it was a one-street hamlet with a railroad running down the middle of its one street, will gather Sunday, June 4, in municipal park for their annual picnic and program.

Supervisor W. J. Buchanan is chairman in charge of the event and he is being assisted by Mrs. Amy McAvoy, Mrs. Gertrude Young, Mrs. Sarah Schmutzler, Constable Joseph Rodda, William Mortimore, and William Lougher.

Since an invitation has been issued to any Pittsburg people to bring their lunches and join with members of the Old Timers at 12:30 on June 4, it seems fitting that an effort be made to have a large representation of the citizenry present to partake in the day's activities and to meet and know those too few old timers who grew up with this community and its surrounding territory.

*Pittsburg Independent*  
May 30, 1939

Former residents and descendants of the Mount Diablo Coal Field have held reunion picnics in the area for many years. When the former coal mining area became an East Bay Regional Park, Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve staff held biennial picnics for many years. William J. Buchanan, who attended school in Nortonville, was involved with numerous reunion picnics, as indicated by the *Antioch Ledger* article above, from May 31, 1935, where he is recorded as serving as the "master of ceremonies."

On the right, ranch hand George Hutchinson standing in front of the horse barn at the Arata Ranch. The date of the photograph and photographer are unknown. George was the son of Sidney Flat prostitute, Fannie Page. Sidney Flat, now the site of Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve headquarters, served as the red-light district during the active days of the Mount Diablo Coal Field. According to coal field descendant, Elmer "Jack" Lougher:

Everybody in the Mount Diablo Coal Field area knew him [George] and he would travel from one ranch to the next, including those of the Lougher, Abrams Vaughn, Arata, Courtney, and Vierra families. No matter how well he was treated, he would only stay for two or three weeks.



P610.453.169

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Arata Family Collection*



P610.436.7

*Courtesy of the Pittsburg Historical Society*

Left, George Hutchinson playing the harmonica, at the Arata Ranch on Somersville Road. No date. Hutchinson would visit various ranches and would work for his keep. According to Elinor "Babe" (Arata) Girolami:

"They'd make him bathe and give him new clothes. He played the harmonica. He was found dead on the side of Somersville Road. He was a good old man." One of George's favorite tunes to play on the harmonica was "Turkey in the Straw." Hutchinson's date of death is not known. Although other sources also report that Hutchinson's body was found along a roadside, accounts differ as to which roadside. Other coal field former residents and descendants, recalled that Hutchinson died "down by Port Chicago." (An area between Pittsburg and Concord in Contra Costa County.) Another stated, "They found his body over on Marsh Creek Road." (A road between Clayton and Brentwood in Contra Costa County.)



## 300 Attend Anniversary Reception Supervisor W. J. Buchanan and Wife Wed 50 Years; Greet Old Friends, Children and Grandchildren

PITTSBURG, Jan. 4—A profusion of flowers, predominantly gold and white roses, provided the background for the golden wedding anniversary reception held yesterday afternoon for 300 guests by Supervisor and Mrs. William J. Buchanan.

In the reception line with the chairman of Contra Costa board of supervisors and his wife were their children, Mrs. Howard Kelley of Kensington Park and Warren G. Buchanan of Pittsburg, and their three grandchildren, Mary Ann and Catherine Kelley and W. E. Buchanan.

### Sister Present

Also present was Supervisor Buchanan's 79-year-old sister, Mrs. Jennie Syme.

Most of the 300 guests signed the anniversary book. They showered the couple with flowers, potted plants and other gifts. Old friends came from all parts of Contra Costa and the bay area, and in many cases the reunion was the first in years.

Buffet refreshments were served.

Mr. Buchanan and the former Nora Carroll were married January 4, 1893 in St. Catherine's parish house in Martinez after a school day romance. Mr. Buchanan was elected supervisor in 1904 and eventually became president of California Supervisors' Association. In addition, he has always been prominent in Pittsburg civic and business activities.

\* \* \*

This article, regarding the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary celebration for W. J. and Nora Buchanan, is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, January 4, 1943, page 5.


## Buchanans Fete Golden Wedding



Scores of friends gathered yesterday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Buchanan in Pittsburg to felicitate the couple on their golden wedding anniversary. They were married January 4, 1893 in Martinez. Mr. Buchanan has been a member of the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors for 38 years and its chairman for the past 22 years.




**Re-Elect**



**W. J.  
BUCHANAN**  
**Supervisor**  
**Fourth District**

Primary Election  
June 1, 1948

The "Re-Elect" advertisement, above, comes from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, April 26, 1948, page 2. The newspaper article, on the right, is also from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, but is dated June 2, 1948, page 1.



**W. J. BUCHANAN**

**Buchanan  
Has No  
Opposition**

Voters of the fourth supervisorial district gave William J. Buchanan, veteran chairman of the board of supervisors, a strong vote of confidence with a complimentary vote of 4,135 in yesterday's primary election.

**Buchanan was running for return to office without opposition but voters of the district nearly all cast votes for him.**

His vote total for his district was higher than that given either delegates for Gov. Earl Warren or Pres. Harry S. Truman, to the Republican and Democratic national conventions. Their delegates were the only other unopposed candidates on the ballot.

### *Buchanan's Brother-In-Law Succumbs*

PITTSBURG, June 8. —James Syme, 75, brother-in-law of Supervisor William J. Buchanan, died today in Antioch hospital where he underwent a major operation June 1.

Syme had lived at 845 Black Diamond street. Funeral services have tentatively been set for 2 p. m. Wednesday at Community church, with Reverend Elmer Benedict officiating.

Syme's close friend, Rev. C. C. Champlin, former pastor of the church, will assist in the services.

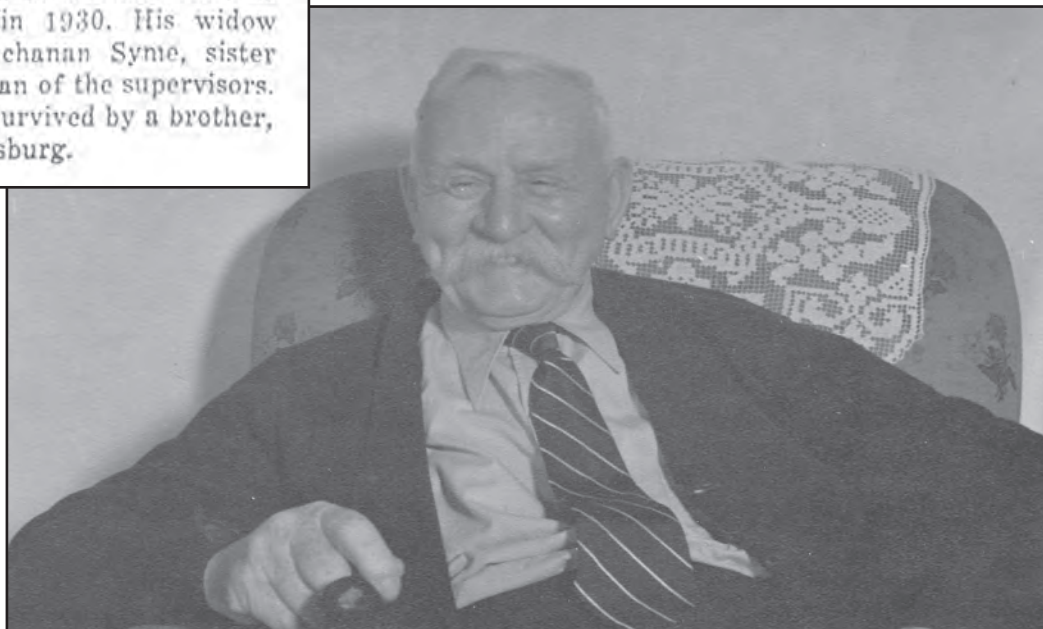
Syme was a native of Leslie, Scotland. He was one of Contra Costa's earlier pioneers, coming here from Youngston, O., 55 years ago. He was a farmer and rancher and retired in 1930. His widow is Jennie Buchanan Syme, sister of the chairman of the supervisors.

He is also survived by a brother, John, of Pittsburg.

The newspaper article, reporting the death of James Syme, is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, June 8, 1942.

Pictured below is James Syme, a native of Scotland. No date. He was the husband of Jeanette "Jennie" (Buchanan) Syme, who was the sister of William J. Buchanan. The Symes were residents of Pittsburg, California.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.17



## Mrs. Janet Syme, Buchanan Sister, Dies At Concord

Funeral services will be held tomorrow at 2 p.m. for Mrs. Janet Syme, 87, a resident of the Pittsburg area for 83 years, who died last night at a Concord rest home, where she had been a patient for a year.

Mrs. Syme was the wife of the late James Syme, and a sister of W. J. Buchanan, chairman of the Board of Supervisors.

She was born in Placerville, Cal., but moved with her parents to Nortonville when a child.

The funeral will be held at the Pittsburg Funeral Chapel and interment will be in the Community cemetery at Antioch.

In addition to her brother, Mrs. Syme leaves a nephew, W. G. Buchanan, a niece, Mrs. Norene B. Kelley, two grandnieces, Margaret and Catherine Kelley, and a grandnephew, William E. Buchanan, all of Pittsburg.



P610.479.16

The newspaper article is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 12, 1950. Pictured above is Jeanette (Buchanan) Syme. No date. Janet [a.k.a. Jeanette] "Jennie" was the older sister of William James Buchanan. Jennie and her brother attended school in the coal mining community of Nortonville. She married James Syme.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



### Nora Buchanan

Funeral services for Mrs. Nora Buchanan, wife of Supervisor W. J. Buchanan, will be held tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock at the Pittsburg Funeral Chapel, with Rev. E. W. Benedict, pastor of the Pittsburg Community church, officiating. Interment will follow at the Antioch Masonic and Odd Fellows cemetery.

Mrs. Buchanan, who would have been 75 years of age August 16, died yesterday morning at Pittsburg Community hospital, after a lengthy illness.

Pallbearers at tomorrow's last rites will be Supervisor R. J. Trembath of Antioch, David Osborne of Nichols, and George E. O'Hara, Ed Wildes, Lark Scudero and George Andrews, of Pittsburg, all friends of the family.

In addition to her husband, who is chairman of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, Mrs. Buchanan is survived by her son, Warren G. Buchanan, manager of Buchanan's Department Store and a past president of the Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce; a daughter, Mrs. Norine Kelley of Pittsburg; three grandchildren, William Buchanan and Margaret and Catherine Kelley, and a niece, Mrs. Norman Schmalholz of Pittsburg.

### Service Are Held

County officials and county employees joined hundreds of persons in Pittsburg Saturday afternoon in attending the funeral of Mrs. Nora Buchanan, wife of William J. Buchanan, chairman of the Board of Supervisors. This was probably the largest funeral ever held in the city.

A wealth of floral offerings testified to the high esteem in which Mrs. Buchanan was held. Services were conducted by the Rev. E. W. Bennett, of Pittsburg Community Church, and interment was in the family plot at Antioch. Pall bearers were Supervisor R. J. Trembath, of Antioch; Dave Osborne, Nichols; George E. O'Hara, Ed Wildes, Lark Scudero, and George Andrews of Pittsburg. Beautiful vocal selections were rendered by Mrs. William Roblin, of Pittsburg, with Mrs. Ray Perry at the piano.

These newspaper articles, regarding the death of Nora (Carroll) Buchanan, are from the *Contra Costa Gazette*. The article on the left is from August 3, 1945, and the article on the right is from August 6, 1945. The Reverend Elmer W. Benedict, from Pittsburg Community Church, is mentioned in both articles. His name is incorrectly spelled as "Bennett" in the article on the right.

Nora (Carroll) Buchanan was born in Portland, Oregon. She moved to New York Landing after her parents died to live with her sister and assist with her nieces and nephews. Nora Carroll married William J. Buchanan on January 4, 1893, in Martinez, Contra Costa County, California. Her husband would live another five years after her death, passing away in 1950.

## Mrs. Nora Buchanan Is Mourned

*Wife of Supervisor Succumbs After Illness At Pittsburg Hospital*

By ELISABETH SUTTON

Flags at the county court house hung at half mast today for Mrs. Nora Buchanan, wife of Supervisor W. J. Buchanan of Pittsburg, following her death this morning at Pittsburg Community hospital.

Mrs. Buchanan, who would have been 75 years of age on the 16th of August, was born in Portland, Oregon and in 1880 came to Pittsburg, or New York Landing as it was then known, as Nora Carroll. She made her home with a sister, the late Mrs. William Abrams.

In 1893 in Martinez, she married William Buchanan with whom she had gone through school. The couple made their home in Pittsburg where Mrs. Buchanan helped her husband establish, in 1896, a general merchandise store. As the town expanded the store grew, changing its location three times. Known as Buchanan's Department Store, it is now located at Fifth and Railroad streets. Mrs. Buchanan managed the women's department of the store until ill health forced her to resign late last year.

(Continued)

A member of the Pittsburg Chapter, O. E. S. and the Diamond Temple, Pythian Sisters, Mrs. Buchanan was principally interested in her family. She devoted herself to her husband and was his constant companion on his numerous trips throughout the state. They celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary with a reception at their home in Pittsburg, January 3. Among the 300 guests was Mr. Buchanan's sister, Mrs. James Syme of Pittsburg, who had been present at the wedding in 1893.

Mrs. Buchanan became ill late last year and underwent major surgery in an East Bay hospital. She was admitted to the Pittsburg hospital last week and several days ago fell into a coma from which she rallied for a few hours this morning.

In addition to her husband, veteran chairman of the Board of Supervisors, she is survived by a son, Warren G. Buchanan, manager of the family store and past president of the Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce; a daughter, Mrs. Norine Kelley of Pittsburg; three grandchildren, William Buchanan, and Catherine and Margaret Kelley. A niece, Mrs. Norman Schmalholz, also lives in Pittsburg.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p. m. Saturday at the Pittsburg Funeral Chapel. Burial will be in the Masonic and Odd Fellow cemetery near Antioch.



MRS. W. J. BUCHANAN, wife of the chairman of the Board of Supervisors, who passed away this morning at the Pittsburg hospital following an illness of several months.

This article, from the Contra Costa Gazette, August 2, 1945, page 1, announces the passing of Nora (Carroll) Buchanan, the wife of William J. Buchanan.



## Howard Kelley, 48, Of Pittsburg, Dies

PITTSBURG, Calif., March 3.— Services are pending at Pittsburg Funeral Home for Howard S. Kelley, 46, husband of the former Norine Buchanan. Kelly died yesterday of a heart ailment after an illness of two years.

Member of a prominent Antioch family, he attended High School there before enrolling at Santa Clara University. He is a brother-in-law of W. J. Buchanan, president of the Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce.

Surviving are his wife, Norine; two daughters, Margaret, 6, and Catherine, 4; mother, Mrs. Ellen Kelley; three sisters, Mrs. Joseph Ruckstuhl, Mrs. Mary Daugherty and Miss Loretta Kelly and a brother, Reginald Kelley of Las Vegas.

## Noreen B. Kelley

PITTSBURG — Services were held today for Mrs. Noreen Buchanan Kelley, member of a well known Contra Costa family, who died Sunday in an Oakland hospital. She was 68.

A native of Pittsburg, Mrs. Kelley is a retired school teacher, having worked many years in the Richmond Unified School District.

She is the daughter of the late W. J. Buchanan, former chairman of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, and the sister of Warren "Bud" Buchanan, also a former Contra Costa County supervisor.

Mrs. Kelley is also survived by two daughters, Mrs. Margaret Ready of Palos Verdes and Mrs. Cathy O'Del of Spain.

Father B. P. Condon of Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Antioch conducted the services at the Caruso Funeral Home.

The newspaper article on the left, regarding the death of Howard Kelley, is from the *Oakland Tribune*, March 3, 1944, page 19. The article on the right, regarding the passing of Norine Kelley, is from the *Oakland Tribune*, November 12, 1968, page 20.

Norine (Buchanan) Kelly was the daughter of William J. and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan. Her husband, Howard Kelley, died in 1944 at the age of 48. Norine (incorrectly spelled as Noreen in the article), survived him and passed away in 1968 at the age of 68. Howard and Norine (Buchanan) Kelly had two daughters, Margaret and Catherine "Cathy."

## Famous Stunt Flier To Perform At Dedication of Buchanan Field

Latest feature to be added to the big air show at Buchanan Field next Sunday is Bill McCune, the famed stunt flyer. It was announced by Iona M. Booth, general manager of the Contra Costa County Development Association, which is in charge of the arrangements on behalf of the Board of Supervisors.

McCune has been seen countless times in public demonstrations and has been in demand for stunt flying by the movies. He has left for Mexico City where he will pick up a special plane for the Buchanan Field performance, landing there Saturday morning, according to the present plans.

Captain Charles Metcalf of the Civil Air Patrol has been named master of ceremonies, and will function at the microphone from 1 o'clock until the conclusion of the big show. He will describe each event for the spectators and will announce the winners in the various contests for which valuable prizes are to be awarded. Among these are the members of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots

Association, who will cut ribbons, burst balloons and execute spectacular spot landings. This organization will have the first function on the program, assembling at the field for breakfast at 8 a. m.

The show is to be staged in connection with the dedication of the field, which will signalize the beginning of its career as a commercial field. It was recently turned back to the Board of Supervisors after having been used as a training center by the Army Air Force during the war. The Air Force will send a jet plane over during the ceremony and will have many types of fighting craft on the ground for inspection by the public.

William J. Buchanan, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, is to receive the plaque, produced by the Columbia Steel Company, from the hands of his 17-year-old grandson, Billy Buchanan. Chairman Buchanan has been a supervisor for 42 years and has been chairman of the Board for 25 years.

This newspaper article, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, August 2, 1946, describes the "big air show at Buchanan Field." The show was "staged in connection with the dedication of the field." The air field was named in honor of long-time Contra Costa County Supervisor, W. J. Buchanan.





P610.479.49

The *Contra Costa Gazette*, August 2, 1946, newspaper article (on the previous page) states:

“William J. Buchanan, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, is to receive the plaque, produced by the Columbia Steel Company, from the hand of his 17-year-old grandson, Billy Buchanan.”

This photograph shows William E. “Billy” Buchanan posing with his grandfather, W. J. Buchanan and the plaque.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

## Dedication Day Program

Supervisor H. L. Cummings, master of ceremonies.  
9:00 to 10:00 a. m.—Breakfast. Members of AOPA.  
9:00 a. m.—Bridal couple leaves Buchanan Field.  
Contests. Members of AOPA. Spot Landings. Bomb Drop-  
ping. Balloon Bursting. Paper Cutting.  
Concert, Richmond Municipal Band.  
1:30 to 2:00 p. m.—Concert, Camp Stoneman Band.  
Flag Raising Ceremony. Bugle Corps. Color Guard.  
Cargo drop by Eastern Airways—10 packages. Bay Area  
newspaper reporters on this four engine C-54 plane.

Captain Charles Metcalf, U. S. Army, master of ceremonies.  
Introduction of Board of Supervisors. Introduction of origi-  
nal airport committee. Presentation of plaque to W. J.  
Buchanan by W. E. Buchanan. Acknowledgement by  
Mr. Buchanan.

Bridal couple arrives from Reno. Mr. and Mrs. Charles  
Jones. Welcome and presentation of gifts.

Slick Airways, Inc., takes off with food for Europe.

Run-off of AOPA Contest.

Stunt Flying.

Presentation of trophies and prizes to members of the  
AOPA.

Parade of Airplanes.

Two Parachute Jumpers.

Model Airplane Demonstration.

On the field:

Mobile Recruiting Exhibit, McClelland Field. One C-46E  
Commando, Slick Airways. 2 P-61's, Black Widows. 2  
A-26, Light Fast Bombers. 2 B-25, Medium Bombers.  
1 C-45, Hospital Ship.

Dealers will have their airplanes on the field for inspection.  
Administration Building. Master Airport Plan. Plan  
for proposed Administration Building.

9:00 p. m.—Night Landings by Flares.

From the *Contra Costa Gazette*, August 3, 1946.

This article announces the dedication day program for the opening of Buchanan Airport.

According to another article in the *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper from August 1, 1946:

Buchanan Field was originally purchased by the Board of Supervisors in 1941 for use as the airport of Contra Costa county. Immediately after Pearl Harbor it was taken over by the Army as a training station for pilots. It has been turned back to the county, and the ceremony next Sunday marks the beginning of its career as an outstanding bay cities commercial airport. The Supervisors plan early construction of new modern hangars and an administration building.



#### FAMILY DINNER

### *Supervisor Buchanan Celebrates 82nd Birthday At Pittsburg Home*

Supervisor William J. Buchanan celebrated his 82nd birthday yesterday with a small dinner party at his Pittsburg home with members of his family.

Among those present at the dinner were Mrs. R. J. Trembath, Mrs. Janet Sims, Mrs. Howard Kelly and the Supervisors two grandchildren, Margaret and

BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR SUPERVISOR BUCHANAN



William J. Buchanan, center, chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County is pictured above celebrating his 82nd birthday at a dinner held in Frasinetti's in Sacramento during the State Fair. Assisting Supervisor Buchanan to celebrate are Supervisor Jacob Frederickson, Mary Smith, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Ray S. Taylor and Supervisor H. L. "Jack" Cummings. *Gazette Staff Photo*

The photograph caption for this article from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, September 12, 1949, states:

William J. Buchanan, center, chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County is pictured above celebrating his 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday at a dinner held in Frasinetti's in Sacramento during the State Fair. Assisting Supervisor Buchanan to celebrate are Supervisor Jacob Frederickson, Mary Smith, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Ray S. Taylor and Supervisor H. L. "Jack" Cummings.

(Continued)

Catherine Kelly.

Buchanan, who was first elected to the Contra Costa board of supervisors in 1903, is a native of Pittsburg. He was born in that community on Sept. 11, 1867 when it was still called New York Landing. His parents, William and Catherine Buchanan, had come to this area the year before from Placer county.

In 1868 the family moved to a ranch four miles to the east of New York Landing where the senior Buchanan raised grain. The supervisor attended school in Nortonville, the political center of the county which had a population of 2,000. New York Landing did not have a school at that time.

Supervisor Buchanan married his wife, the late Nora Carroll, in 1893, at St. Catherine's parish house in Martinez. The couple had two children, W. J. Buchanan, and a daughter, Norine. In 1893 the supervisor went into the general mercantile business, which was located at First and York streets in Pittsburg. Mrs. Buchanan presided as postmistress for 14 years. In 1905 the Buchanans built a two-story brick store building at First and Black Diamond streets. In 1923 they erected their present building in Pittsburg.

The supervisor first entered politics when he became the first chairman of the Pittsburg board of trustees. In 1903 he was elected to the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors. In 1921 he became the chairman of the board, a position which he still holds.

## VETERAN BOARD CHAIRMAN SUFFERS HEART ATTACK; CONDITION SATISFACTORY

Board Chairman William J. Buchanan, 83, was in Pittsburg Hospital today, reported resting comfortably after a heart attack late Thursday.

Buchanan was returning from a meeting with the supervisors in Pleasant Hill when the attack occurred, his daughter, Mrs. Norine Kelley said today.

Doctors will confine the venerable Buchanan to his hospital bed for several days rest, Mrs. Kelley said.

"He is much improved today," Mrs. Kelley added, "and we feel confident he will be better."

Severity of the heart attack has not been determined, Mrs. Kelley said. However, doctors attending reported to her that Buchanan's heart action was nearly back to normal today.

Monday's regular meeting of the board will be without the chairman who has been a supervisor since 1904, and is the oldest board member in California in terms of both service and age.

He has been chairman of the board for 32 years.

A widower, Buchanan lives at



W. J. Buchanan, veteran Contra Costa supervisor, who is resting at Pittsburg hospital after a heart attack.

547 East 12th street, Pittsburg.  
with his daughter, Mrs. Kelley.

The *Contra Costa Gazette*, September 30, 1950, reported on the heart attack that William J. Buchanan suffered when returning home from a meeting in Pleasant Hill, California.



## Buchanan's Condition 'Critical'

The condition of Board of Supervisors Chairman William J. Buchanan was termed "critical" today by Pittsburg Community Hospital attendants.

Mr. Buchanan, 83, who suffered a heart attack while returning home from a Pleasant Hill supervisors meeting last Thursday, has developed other complications, it was reported.

His daughter, Mrs. Nadine Kelley, and son, W. G. Buchanan, were called to the hospital early this morning by attending doctors.

Mr. Buchanan has been a member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors continuously since his first election in 1904. He is the oldest elected California official in point of both age and service.



P610.479.50

William J. Buchanan. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

This article, reporting Buchanan's "critical" condition after suffering a heart attack, is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 4, 1950.

The article incorrectly states the name of Buchanan's daughter as "Nadine" Kelley. Her name was Norine Kelley.

## GOV. WARREN PAYS BUCHANAN TRIBUTE

SACRAMENTO, Oct. 6 (U.P.)—Governor Earl Warren today expressed sorrow regarding the death of Contra Costa Board of Supervisors Chairman William Buchanan, whom Warren described as “the dean of all supervisors in the state.”

“He was a splendid public servant,” Warren said. “He did as much as any man I know to build Contra Costa County to its present very important position in the state.”

Warren described Buchanan, who died today of a heart attack, as “tougher than nails” and “a rugged individualist if there ever was one.”

Warren said the “only thing that could have made me felt more at home” during a supervisors meeting in Long Beach yesterday “was to have seen Billy Buchanan in the audience.”

Buchanan became a Contra Costa County supervisor in 1904 and had been chairman since 1930.

William J. Buchanan was admired by many, as referenced by California’s Governor Warren who paid a tribute to Buchanan in this newspaper article from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 6, 1950.

# Hundreds Troop Past Bier At Buchanan Rites

"He leaves a lonesome place against the sky."

With that quotation from Edwin Markham's "Lincoln, the Man," the Rev. Elmer W. Benedict yesterday said goodbye to William James Buchanan for thousands of people.

Little and big people, unimportant and important people crowded Rev. Benedict's Pittsburg Community church to pay a final, stirring tribute to the 83-year-old supervisor, who died last Friday morning.

To Rev. Benedict, Mr. Buchanan whom he had known for 15 years, was "not a man of changing moods."

"He must have known some moments of discomfort, but you would never know it when you met him

and talked with him," he said.

Of well over 1200 persons who came to the short church services only 375 could make it into the small brick church.

The rest—those who could not hear the eulogy—were content to file past the bier for a last look at the physical remains of a man who became a political institution in Contra Costa and California.

Rev. Benedict compared Mr. Buchanan's life in Pittsburg to the growth of a tree.

"His roots went deep into the soil—they spread far in many directions."

He read the 23rd Psalm—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy

(Continued on Page 4)

This article, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 10, 1950, discusses the memorial service held for W. J. Buchanan. It continues on the following page.



(Continued)

## Hundreds Troop Past Bier At Buchanan Rites

(Continued from Page 1)

and thy staff they comfort me."

Masonic services followed under direction of George Ward, acting master of Pittsburg Lodge No. 429. He was aided by Archie McFaul, lodge chaplain.

From the Church in Pittsburg, a funeral procession of over a mile in length was police-escorted through Antioch to Community Cemetery on the Brentwood highway.

There, the bronze casket bearing Mr. Buchanan's remains was lowered into the ground beside those of his wife, Nora, who died in 1945, and his sister, Mrs. Janet C. Syme who was 87 when she passed away a week ago last Sunday.

Mr. Buchanan was never told of her death. Doctor's feared the news might have a disastrous effect on his then weakened heart.

Just before the casket was lowered, Mr. Buchanan's pallbearers, Armand Stow, H. C. Chapin, E. H. Ward, Mike Mulcahy, G. E. Seeno and David Osborne, and honorary pallbearers, most county officials, placed their buttonhole carnations on the casket.

The sun was dodging behind western hills. The last, formal rites for a remarkable citizen had reached a climax.

This newspaper article from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 10, 1950, continues from the previous page.

Another *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper account from October 7, 1950, stated that funeral services will be held at the Pittsburg Community Church. The article went on to say:

Indications today were that more than 3,000 friends from all parts of the county, the Bay Area and the state will attend the rites. Scores of messages, by telephone and wire, are pouring into the Buchanan's home in Pittsburg...Headed by Governor Warren and U. S. Senator William Knowland, public officials throughout the state and the county sent messages of regret and condolence.



## APPOINTMENT TO BUCHANAN POST GOOD 'TILL 1952

The term of anyone appointed to succeed the late William J. Buchanan as fourth district supervisor would be until the November 1952 general election, District Attorney Francis W. Collins said today.

Conjecture on the length of term of anyone appointed now to fill the vacancy created when Mr. Buchanan died last Friday, had been rife in the county.

Collins explained that the 40 days required for qualifying of candidates for the November 7 election would be impossible, and that there is no other election at which the post could be challenged until 1952.

Most popularly rumored selection of Governor Earl Warren for the vacant supervisor post, is Warren G. (Bud) Buchanan, son of the late supervisor.



P610.477.8

*Contra Costa Gazette*  
October 12, 1950

*Courtesy of the Pittsburg Historical Society*

Pictured is Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan, son of William J. and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan. No date. According to the *Contra Costa Gazette* (image above), Bud was "Most popularly rumored selection of Governor Earl Warren for the vacant supervisor post" once held by his father. Bud held the position of Contra Costa County Supervisor from 1950 to 1960, when he lost the election to Edmund R. Linscheid. A grocery store owner in Pittsburg, Linscheid served on the Pittsburg City Council for three years prior to the election.



P610.479.20

The caption written on this photograph states, "Buchanan's first supervisor group." The photograph is undated, but most likely it was 1950. The image was taken by Attinello's Studio in Martinez, California. The Contra Costa County Supervisors, pictured, left to right, are: Joseph S. Silva, Supervisor District 5; Warren G. Buchanan, Supervisor District 4; Ray S. Taylor, Supervisor District 3; Mel F. Nielsen, Supervisor District 2; and Ivan T. Goyak, Supervisor District 1. The photograph of William J. Buchanan, Warren Buchanan's father, hangs on the wall behind them.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

## Warren Buchanan

Funeral services will be held at 11 this morning for Warren G. Buchanan, a 10-year member and past president of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.

Services will be held at the Caruso Funeral Home, 107 W. Eighth St., Pittsburg.

Mr. Buchanan, 71, a native of Pittsburg, died Saturday in a Pittsburg hospital following a heart attack.

He had represented the



**WARREN BUCHANAN**

fourth district on the Board of Supervisors from 1950 to 1960 and had also served on the county's Fair Board, Development Association and Peace Officers Association.

(Continued)

He was district chairman of the Boy Scouts and past president of the Pittsburg Historical Society, East Contra Costa County Realtors Association, Mount Diablo Savings and Loan Association, Last Man's Club of World War I and the State Grocers Association.

Mr. Buchanan had operated a grocery store in Pittsburg many years before he retired and became manager of a real estate and insurance brokerage operation.

He was also a member of the Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Masons, Community Church, Eastern Star, Rotary Club, and American Legion, all in Pittsburg.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth, son, William Buchanan, and four grandchildren, all of Pittsburg.

This obituary for Warren Buchanan is from the *Contra Costa Times*, March 31, 1970. From 1950 to 1960, Warren "Bud" Buchanan served as a Contra Costa County Supervisor, representing the fourth district.

The image used in the obituary, however, is not Warren Buchanan. The newspaper unfortunately used an image of Edmund R. Linscheid, the man who defeated Buchanan in the 1960 election.



## Memorial Will Be Dedicated at Somersville Oct. 7

The Native Daughters of the Golden West are making preparations for dedicating the monument in honor of the pioneers of Nortonville and Somersville on Sunday, October 7, at 1:30 p. m.

The monument is a ten-foot concrete shaft, which has been placed in the old Somersville cemetery, where many pioneers of the county and relatives of many Antioch and Pittsburg residents are buried.

The ceremony will be under the auspices of the Pittsburg Parlor of Native Daughters, and many members of the order from all over the State, as well as those interested in the historical shrines of pioneer days will be present.

In the monument will be placed a memorial plaque, which was donated by the Columbia Steel Company through Superintendent William Cohn. It is inscribed:

"Erected by Stirling Parlor, No. 146 N. D. G. W. and Diamond Parlor, N. S. G. W. in memory of the pioneers of Nortonville and Somersville."

Mrs. Amy McAvoy of Pittsburg, former grand president of the Native Daughters, is chairman of the program which she will announce in detail next week.



P610.98.16

Pictured is the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West monument in Rose Hill Cemetery in 1962. Photograph by Madison Devlin. The dedication of this monument was held on October 7, 1934. The newspaper article is from the *Antioch Ledger*, September 24, 1934.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Madison Devlin Collection*



**SHAFT ERECTED  
TO HONOR COAL  
TOWN PIONEERS**

**Hoey Principal Speaker  
At Services Held Sun-  
day at Somersville.**

Honoring pioneers of Nortonville and Somersville, "ghost" towns of the coal mining district south of Pittsburg, several hundred persons gathered Sunday afternoon at the old Somersville cemetery to dedicate a plaque under the direction of Stirling parlor, No. 146, Native Daughters of the Golden West.

The event was a notable one with members of the Native Daughters and Native Sons from all parts of the county attending.

The dedicatory program, arranged under the direction of a committee headed by Mrs. Amy McAvoy as chairman, and with Supervisor W. J. Buchanan as chairman, presented District Attorney James F. Hoey as the principal speaker.

Paying tribute to pioneers of the county, Hoey gave a comprehensive history of the two towns.

This article, from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, October 8, 1934, discusses the October 7, 1934, dedication of the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West monument in Rose Hill Cemetery. The article states that W. J. Buchanan served as chairman of the event.

(Continued)

**Grand Officers**

Chairman Buchanan presented three past grand presidents of the Native Daughters, Mrs. Estelle Evans of Antioch, Mrs. Amy McAvoy of Pittsburg and Dr. Mariana Bertola of San Francisco, and one past grand president of the Native Sons, County Treasurer Charles L. Dodge. All spoke briefly.

He also introduced three men who have been members of General Winn parlor of Native Sons of Antioch for more than 50 years.

They are Sheriff R. R. Veale, William U'Ren and Joseph O'Hare.

The plaque, donated by Columbia Steel Company, bears this inscription:

"Erected by Stirling parlor No. 146, N. D. G. W., and Diamond parlor No. 246, N. S. G. W., in memory of the pioneers of Nortonville and Somersville."

Hoey, a past grand president of the Native Sons, offered a most interesting and detailed history of the early days of the Pittsburg section, dwelling principally on Nortonville and Somersville.

He related the discovery of the mines, their development, their importance to nearby communities, the character of the population, events in the history of both, organization of lodges and membership, and finally the decline, due to discovery of veins of harder coal, and the transition to "ghost" towns with buildings being moved away.

Among local people present at the ceremonies were District Attorney and Mrs. James F. Hoey, Sheriff and Mrs. R. R. Veale, County Treasurer C. L. Dodge, County Auditor and Mrs. A. N. Sullenger, Public Administrator and Mrs. Raymond Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Alton E. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. George Hinrichsen, Mrs. Nellie Nicholson, Mrs. Nina Keefe, Mrs. Rose Milliff and Mrs. Frances Upton.



P610.407.70

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*

Pictured at the lectern, left to right, are Traci Gibbons, Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve Supervising Naturalist and Laurie (Buchanan) Pease with her son, Ben W. Pease. Laurie Pease is the great-granddaughter of William J. Buchanan. Sitting far right is Beverly Lane, East Bay Regional Park District Board of Director for Ward 6. The other dignitary is unknown.

On October 9, 2004, a 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary event was held to commemorate the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West monument that was erected in Rose Hill Cemetery in 1934. The monument honors the pioneers of Nortonville and Somersville. Over 80 people attended the event including coal field descendants, elected officials, and other dignitaries. Officials from the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West also spoke during the celebration.

To honor the occasion, a wreath was placed at the base of the monument by Ben W. Pease, the great-great-grandson of former Contra Costa County Supervisor, William J. Buchanan. At the October 7, 1934, event Supervisor Buchanan served as Master of Ceremonies for the dedication and a wreath was also laid at the foot of the monument. Pictured right, placing a wreath at the monument, is Ben W. Pease. Photographs taken October 9, 2004, by Karen Terhune.



P610.407.71



## PIONEER GOES TO HIS LONG REST

### After Years of Suffering Wm. Abrams Succumbs To Operation

William Abrams, a pioneer of Pittsburg, passed into the "great beyond," at Mount Zion hospital in San Francisco on Monday morning at 5:30 o'clock. Death came to him at the age of 62 years, 10 months and 11 days, following an operation for a carbuncle on the back of his neck, the result of chronic diabetes, from which he long had been a sufferer, without having been aware of it. The funeral services will be held in the chapel of the undertaking parlors of H. F. Suhr & Co., 2919 Mission street, San Francisco, tomorrow (Wednesday) morning at 10:30 o'clock.

Mr. Abrams was one of the early residents of this section, having come here with his family when he was a child, and as far back as the '70s worked in the coal mines at Nortonville. His father was killed in the gold mines in Calaveras county many years ago. His mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Rodgers, who is hale and hearty, although having passed her eightieth year, lives here in Pittsburg.

This article, regarding the death of William Abrams, is from the *Pittsburg Dispatch*, July 31, 1917, page 1. William Abrams married Annie Carroll in 1882. Annie Carroll was the sister of Nora Carroll, who was married to William J. Buchanan.

The article states: "Mr. Abrams was one of the early residents of this section, having come here with his family when he was a child, and as far back as the '70s worked in the coal mines at Nortonville."

Note that Abrams' mother is listed as Mrs. Elizabeth Rodgers [sic] in the article. She was married to Thomas Rogers. Her prior husband was William Abrams.

(Continued)

In 1882, he was married to Miss Annie Carroll, a sister of Mrs. W. J. Buchanan, by whom he is survived. Besides a loving wife and mother, there are left to mourn his loss, five daughters, Mrs. T. J. Garagnella, Mrs. G. L. Tyler, Mrs. William Jongeneel, Mrs. N. T. Schmalholz and Miss Margaret Abrams.

Mr. Abrams was for many years actively engaged in business in Pittsburg, and was one of the best known men in this section of the country. He retired from business a few years ago, owing to failing health and the shock occasioned by the death of three of his children in one week; his eldest daughter, only son and a baby being carried off by diphtheria.

He had been in failing health for some time and early last week went to San Francisco to consult his physician. He had long been a sufferer from carbuncles and boils breaking out on his face and neck, and when he visited his physician last week, the latter noted that he was in a serious condition and advised an operation at once.

The operation was successfully performed at Mount Zion hospital and while he was in a pretty precarious condition for some hours thereafter, he rallied and continued to improve to such an extent, that his complete recovery seemed certain. Early Sunday morning, however, he took a turn for the worse and at 5:30 on Monday morning the end came to his sufferings.

William Abrams' friends were legion in this country and the *Dispatch* joins with them in offering sincere condolences to the stricken family in the loss of a staunch and true friend.

### MRS. MARGARET GRIFFITHS

#### Notable Life of Pioneer Lady— Sprightly at 83

Mrs. Margaret Griffiths has lived on the road to Nortonville, some four miles from Pittsburg, for fifty years.

Last week she had a birthday—a lady may be well proud of her birthdays when she is 83.

Born in Wales—the land of Lloyd George—at a place called Merthyr, she came in a sailing ship from Liverpool to New York, when twelve years old. Time on the water, six weeks and three days.

The family settled in Pennsylvania; Margaret grew up and married Reese Thomas. There was born four children, of whom one is Mrs. Margaret Abrams, mother of William and Warren Abrams.

Mrs. Thomas crossed the Isthmus in '62 and settled with her family in Sierra county, where they remained for five years; then going to Nortonville in '67, and to the ranch in '69, where she has lived continuously since, and in the same house.

It was while living at Nortonville that Reese Thomas died, and later the widow married Mr. Griffiths.

(Continued)

The children now living are Mrs. Margaret Abrams of Pittsburg, Evan Thomas, nightwatchman of Antioch, Mrs. Mary Jones, wife of a San Francisco attorney, Mrs. John Sipple of San Francisco, Elvira Thomas of the same city, and Reese Thomas who lives with his mother and conducts a successful stock ranch.

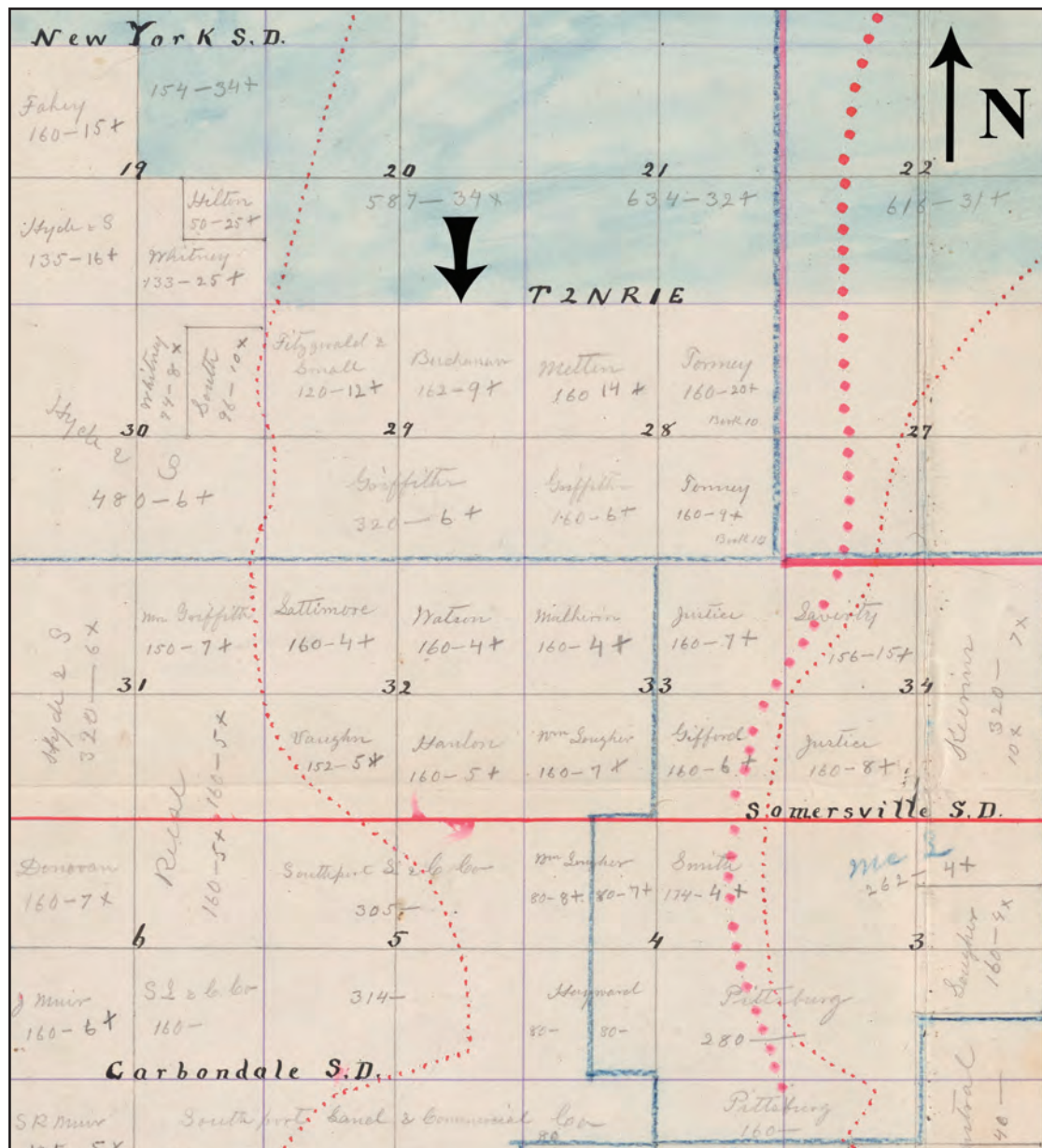
The following friends of Mrs. Griffiths were her birthday guests: Mrs. M. W. Dunnigan, Mrs. Annie Nichols, Mrs. Mary Wirz, Mrs. Jennie Syme, also a large number of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Her pastor, Rev. C. C. Champ- lin, also carried messages of love and good cheer from hosts of members of the church. Mrs. Griffiths is the oldest member of the local Congrega- tional Church—indeed, she was a member before the old structure was moved down from Nortonville.

She is in excellent health, is keen of wit, and loves a joke. The guests were highly entertained by her dry remarks and reminiscences.

From the *Pittsburg Post*, June 22, 1918, page 1. This article incorrectly spells Margaret's last name as "Griffiths." The correct spelling is Griffith. On page 16, Ruth Buchanan states: "There were Abrams. They owned the ranch right behind us. (See map on page 101.) And there were Thomas' who were on the old road now when you go to Nortonville [Nortonville Road]."

The Thomas, Griffith, and Abrams families were all related through marriage. Margaret Edwards married Rees G. Thomas. They had six children together. After Thomas died in 1875, Margaret married David E. Griffith. Thomas and Griffith were friends and they are both buried in Rose Hill Cemetery. Margaret Jane Thomas, a daughter Margaret (Edwards) Thomas Griffith, married John Abrams. Margaret Jane and John Abrams had two sons, Warren B. and William A. Abrams. For more information regarding these families, see pages 100 to 113.

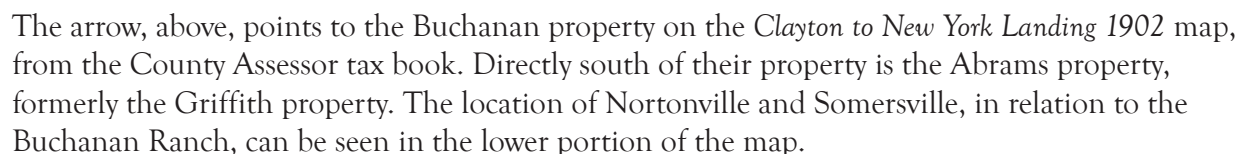




The arrow, above, indicates the Buchanan property on this Clayton to New York Landing 1892 map, from the County Assessor tax book. Directly south of their property is the Griffith property, later to become the Abrams property when inherited by Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams. The Griffith land belonged to David Griffith. See page 99 for more information regarding these two families.

Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society

## February 15, 2004



Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society





P610.480.1

The Abrams structure at the Abrams ranch in Pittsburg, California, February 1965. Photographer unknown. Standing next to the building are George Vivian (left) and William Abrams (right). George Vivian once lived in the coal mining communities of Stewartville and Somersville.

William Abrams lived in this house until 1963. When Abrams died in 1968, his cousin, Wayne Thomas, received the house and ranch as an inheritance. According to the *Pittsburg Press* newspaper, March 25, 1979, page 3, in the article titled "Progress threatens ranch":

The ranch was developed in the 1860s by his [Abrams'] step-father, Dave Griffith, who ran a slaughterhouse and provided meat to the Stuartville [sic, Stewartville] miners at the old Central Coal Mine... Thomas' cousins, William and Warren Abrams, inherited the ranch in 1900 and moved there in 1902... They built the big house in 1921... William Abrams also built a smaller house not far from the big one out of lumber from a structure he owned near the Central Mine.

The building pictured is the smaller structure he built with wood from Stewartville. In March 1980, part of this structure was moved to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve. The portion of the structure directly behind Vivian and Abrams (on the left side of the image) was left on the Thomas property. See page 106 for additional information regarding the history of this structure.

*Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society*



P610.399.7

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*



P610.9.2

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Karana Hattersley-Drayton Collection*

The Abrams structure as it stood on the Wayne Thomas Ranch in 1980, just before it was moved to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve. The photograph, above, was taken by Joanne Dean. The photograph, on the left, was taken by Karana Hattersley-Drayton.





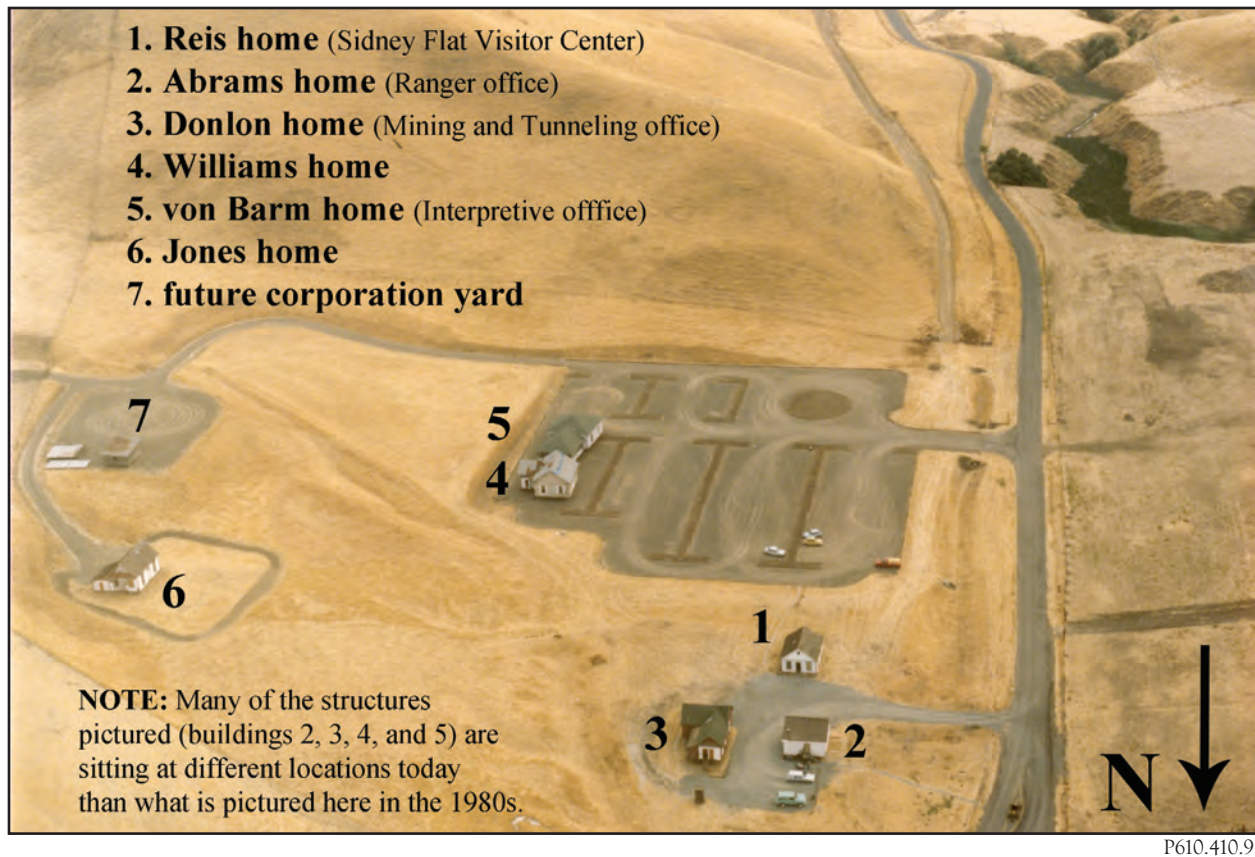
P610.399.4

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*



P610.65.3

The Abrams building was the first of six structures moved to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve. When the building was first moved to the preserve in 1980, it was placed on the west side of Somersville Road, near the Lougher ranch house. (See photograph above.) The structure was used as the park headquarters for staff and had no electricity, heat, or phones. Later, the building was moved to the east side of Somersville Road. Photographs taken in the 1980s by Traci Gibbons.



*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*



The Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve park headquarters complex under development on the east side of Somersville Road in the 1980s. In the image above, the parking lot can be seen in the center of the photograph and Somersville Road on the far right. The Pittsburg Railroad bed, in the upper portion of this photograph, parallels Somersville Road. Left, the buildings, most of them former coal mining structures, were moved to the park from nearby communities. Once at the park, the Abrams building was moved numerous times before being placed in its final location. Photographs by Traci Gibbons.





The Abrams structure located at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve park headquarters. The building is used as the office for the park rangers. Photographs taken November 2021 by Traci Gibbons.



The Abrams structure was moved to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve from the Wayne Thomas Ranch in March 1980. According to the document, *Historic Buildings Sidney Flat Office Complex*, compiled by Traci Gibbons and Bev Ortiz, 1984:

Stewartville saloonkeeper, John Abrams, lived in this house with his wife, Margaret Jane Thomas (born May 26, 1861), whom he married in approximately 1882, and with their two sons, Warren (born 1883) and William (born 1885). When Margaret's uncle, David Griffith, died, she and her two sons inherited his ranch property in Pittsburg. (Margaret had separated from her husband by this time.)

Since there was only a one-room "shack" on the property when the family moved to the ranch in 1902, William took it upon himself to move their former Stewartville home to the ranch. He marked the boards and moved them by wagon to the Buchanan Road ranch site. The family moved into the structure in 1904. A kitchen was added in 1912 and a bathroom in approximately 1933. The building was wired for electricity probably in 1938 when electricity was brought to the ranch.

The building was owned originally by John and Margaret Abrams, followed by William Abrams and finally Wayne Thomas, who received the ranch and structure as an inheritance.

## Thomas/Abrams Partial Family Tree

### Father

#### Rees Thomas

b. 1827, Aug. 30, Wales  
d. 1875, Dec. 6, San Francisco, San Francisco Co., CA  
Age 48 years

### Mother

#### Margaret (Edwards) Thomas

b. 1835, June 14, Wales  
d. 1921, May 13, near Pittsburg, Contra Costa Co., CA,  
Age 85 years

Married Rees Thomas, 1854

Children: Margaret, Evan, Maryann, Joan, Elvira, Rees

2nd husband

#### David E. Griffith

b. 1824, Cardiganshire, Wales  
d. 1900, May 20, near Cornwall, Contra Costa Co., CA,  
Age 76 years

### Daughter of Margaret (Edwards) Thomas & Rees Thomas

#### Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams

b. 1861, PA  
d. 1956, July, 20, Stockton, San Joaquin Co., CA,  
Age 95 years

Children: Warren Brewster and William Abner

### Husband of Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams

Son of William & Eliza Abrams (a.k.a. Mrs. Elizabeth Rogers)

#### John Abrams

b. 1855 or 1858, California  
d. 1911, Aug., Pittsburg, Contra Costa Co., CA  
Age 53 or 56 years

Married Margaret Jane Thomas, date unknown

### Son of Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams & John Abrams

#### Warren Brewster Abrams

b. 1883, Jan. 27, New York Landing, Contra Costa Co., CA  
d. 1964, Nov. 16, Concord, Contra Costa Co., CA  
Age 81 years

Married Margaret McMullin, 1921

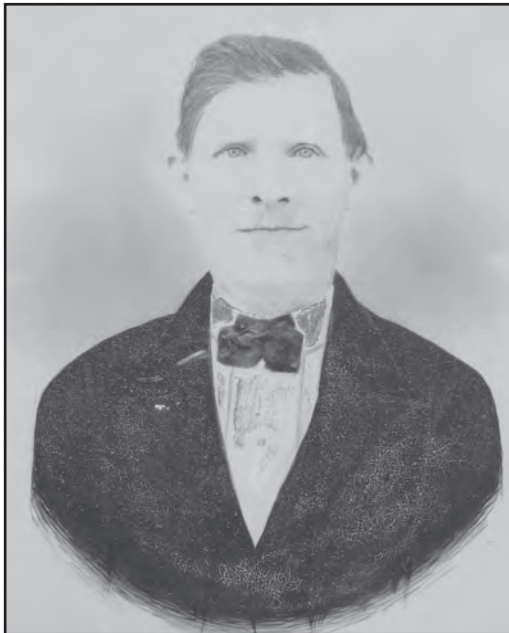
### Son of Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams & John Abrams

#### William Abner Abrams

b. 1885, Oct. 9, CA  
d. 1968, Feb. 3, Walnut Creek, Contra Costa Co., CA  
Age 82 years

This partial family tree shows the connection between the Thomas, Griffith, and Abrams families. These families, all related through marriage, owned the land directly south of the Buchanan family. Like the Buchanan family, they had a connection to Nortonville with the children attending school in Nortonville before a school existed in the nearby community of New York Landing (now Pittsburg).





P610.348.1

Pictured, left, is a drawing of Rees G. Thomas, husband of Margaret (Edwards) Thomas. No date. Rees Thomas was the father of Margaret Jane Thomas who married John Abrams.

After Rees died in 1875, Margaret married Rees' good friend, David E. Griffith. Griffith, pictured below in 1898, died in 1900. Both Rees Thomas and David E. Griffith are buried in Rose Hill Cemetery.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Tina, Wayne, and William Rees Thomas Collection*



P610.349.1

## THE GRIFFITHS ESTATE.

### How a Large Fortune is Distributed Among Relatives.

#### Will of a Pioneer of This County Filed for Probate in the Superior Court.

Last week David E. Griffiths of Nortonville, one of the best known residents in the county, while riding on a horse was thrown and received injuries that resulted in his death. This week in the Superior Court a petition for the probate of his will was filed by Attorney W. S. Tinning, acting for Samuel Brown and David Davis, who are named as executors in the document. The will is dated April 7, 1899, and bears the names of A. E. Dunkel and A. V. Ipswitch as subscribing witnesses. The matter will come up for hearing on the 16th of June.

The deceased left an estate worth \$25,000, consisting of the Starr Hotel at Crockett, \$8,000; 480 acres of land near Cornwall, \$6,000; a lot in the town of Paso Robles, \$1,000; live stock, \$500; money in bank, \$6,000, and claims against the estate of John E. Hughes, \$2,000.

(Continued)

The only heir in this State is the widow. The others reside in the East and in Wales. This is where the great majority of them are. The following bequests are made: To his sister, Elizabeth Lewis, \$2,000; to R. Griffiths, son of his brother, \$2,000; to Mary and Ann Griffiths each \$2,000; to his brother William Griffiths \$2,000; to Warren and William Abrams, share and share alike, the S.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Sec. 29 and the N. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 31, T. 2 N., R. 1 E.; to Rees G. Thomas, the lot in Paso Robles; to Warren and William Abrams and Rees G. Thomas, share and share alike, all of the stock and farming implements; to Margaret Abrams, \$1,000; to Elvira Thomas, \$500; to his wife, \$100. He states that this is sufficient, as she has separate property of her own, and that during his life time he spent \$5,000 of his own money in improving it. To David Griffiths of Pittsburg and David Griffiths of Macon county, Missouri, \$500 each. All of the remainder of the property is left to Mary and Ann Griffiths, share and share alike.

He directs that his body be buried beside that of Joe E. Edwards in the Somersville cemetery, but if this is not possible, then his body is to be placed beside that of his old friend Thomas John in the cemetery at Clayton.

This newspaper article, regarding the Estate of David E. Griffith, is from the *Contra Costa Gazette*, May 26, 1900. Notice that Griffith (incorrectly spelled as Griffiths in this article) leaves some of his estate to Warren and William Abrams and their mother (his stepdaughter), Margaret Abrams. He also leaves a small portion of the estate to his widow, Margaret (Edwards) Thomas Griffith.



## Abrams' Father First Brakeman On Mine Line

John Abrams was the first brakeman on the Black Diamond Railway and later was promoted to clerk.

As east-west rail service stepped up the delivery of supplies here, it became one of Abrams' nightly jobs to load a boxcar with food and miscellaneous articles for delivery to Nortonville.

Abrams was the husband of Margaret Thomas whose family came here in 1868, an era when the present day Armory site was used as a rodeo or round-up ground for cattle branding by Spaniards.

The pioneer couple's two sons, Warren and Bill, today are cattle ranchers in the area south of Buchanan Road, and also operate an 800-acre home ranch, all of it an original homestead.

## PIONEER NATIVE SON

### John Abrams Died at Pittsburg Home Tuesday.

Following a short illness, death came suddenly and unexpectedly to John Abrams at the home of his brother at Pittsburg last Tuesday.

Abrams was a native of California and said to be the oldest Native Son in the county, being 56 years of age at the time of his death. He had been in Alaska for some years and returned from the North only a few months ago since which time he had made his home with his mother and brother.

Besides a wife there are left two sons, William and Warren Abrams, prominent cattle raisers, who reside south of Antioch. His mother, Mrs. Thos. Rodgers and a brother, William Abram, who resides at Pittsburg.

A short funeral service was held at his late residence in Pittsburg on Thursday, under the auspices of the Native Sons lodge of that place, following which the remains were taken to Martinez for interment.

This article regarding John Abrams, the husband of Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams, appeared in the *Post Dispatch* on August 21, 1961, page 25.

The *Antioch Ledger* newspaper, August 12, 1911, reported the death of John Abrams.

## Passing of Pioneer.

As we go to press we learn of the death of Mrs. Margaret Griffith, the beloved mother of Margaret J. Abrams, Evan E. Thomas, Mrs. H. Sipple, Mrs. M. G. Owens and Rees G. Thomas. Death occurred at the home of the deceased near this city.

Mrs. Griffith was 85 years and 11 months old and a native of Wales. Her death marks the passing of nearly the last of the rugged pioneers of this section. of whom further notice will be made next week.

Funeral services will be held Sunday, May 15th, at 2 o'clock.

*Pittsburg Post*  
May 14, 1921

The obituary for Margaret Jane Abrams's (on the right) incorrectly stated that her husband, John Abrams, died in 1912. John Abrams died in 1911. See previous page.

This page contains the obituaries for Mrs. Margaret Griffith, wife of David E. Griffith, and her daughter, Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams, wife of John Abrams.

## Last Rites Held for Pittsburg Pioneer, 95

Funeral services were conducted yesterday in Pittsburg for Mrs. Margaret Jane Abrams, 95, member of a county pioneer family, who died Friday at Stockton.

Mrs. Abrams, of 1100 A Buchanan Road, lived in the Nortonville-Pittsburg area 88 years. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Reese J. Thomas homesteaded at Nortonville. Her husband, John Abrams, died in 1912.

She is survived by two sons, Warren B. and Williams Abrams, prominent ranchers.

*Contra Costa Gazette*  
July 24, 1956



## DEATH STRIKES

### Man, Wife Die Same Day at 81

PITTSBURG—Mr. and Mrs. Warren B. Abrams, a pioneer couple who had been married 42 years, died yesterday within hours of each other.

Both were 81.

Mrs. Margaret Abrams died yesterday morning in a Concord rest home. Her husband died yesterday afternoon in Concord Community Hospital.

Mr. Abrams, a member of the first cattle ranching family in the area, had been a rancher all his life, and had extensive land holdings along the foothills south of the city.

He was born in Pittsburg when it was known as New York Landing, and took a coal train to Nortonville to attend school.

He was one of the founders of the First National Bank of Pittsburg which now is Bank of America. Mr. Abrams was a member of Pittsburg Elks Club and Pittsburg Oddfellows Lodge.

Mrs. Abrams was born in Clipper Gap in the Mother Lode country, but moved here when she was five years old.

He leaves a brother, William A. Abrams, at the home ranch, 1100 Buchanan Road, where the couple had lived until lengthy illness forced retirement.

Mrs. Abrams leaves a sister, Mrs. Myrtle Bassett, of Pittsburg.

A funeral for the couple is planned at 1 p.m. Thursday in Pittsburg Funeral Chapel.

The article, on the left, regarding the death of Mr. and Mrs. Warren B.

Abrams, is from the *Oakland Tribune*, November 17, 1964.

The article below about the marriage of Warren Abrams to Margaret McMullin, is from the *Pittsburg Post*, April 23, 1921.

## RANCHER WEDS

### Miss Margaret McMullin Becomes Bride of Warren Abrams

On Tuesday Warren B. Abrams, a well-known rancher, led to the marriage altar, Miss Margaret McMullin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George McMullin of this city.

The ceremony was performed in Martinez. William Abrams, brother of the groom, was best man, and Miss Dora Wilson was bridesmaid.

Both groom and bride are of pioneer stock, and are well and favorably known. Mr. Abrams is a successful rancher and stock raiser, and is vice-president of the First National Bank of Pittsburg.

The newlyweds are receiving the congratulations of a large circle of friends.

## William Abrams

PITTSBURG — Funeral services will be held tomorrow for William A. Abrams, long-time cattle rancher, who died Saturday in a Walnut Creek Hospital at the age of 82.

A native of Nortonville, Calif., Mr. Abrams started working in the coal mines in Nortonville as a small boy, and remained a miner until the mines closed.

After the mines closed, he took over the operation of his grandfather's cattle ranch on Buchanan Road.

Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. at the Pittsburg Funeral Chapel, 2295 Railroad Ave.

The obituary, for William Abrams (above), is from the *Oakland Tribune*, February 6, 1968.

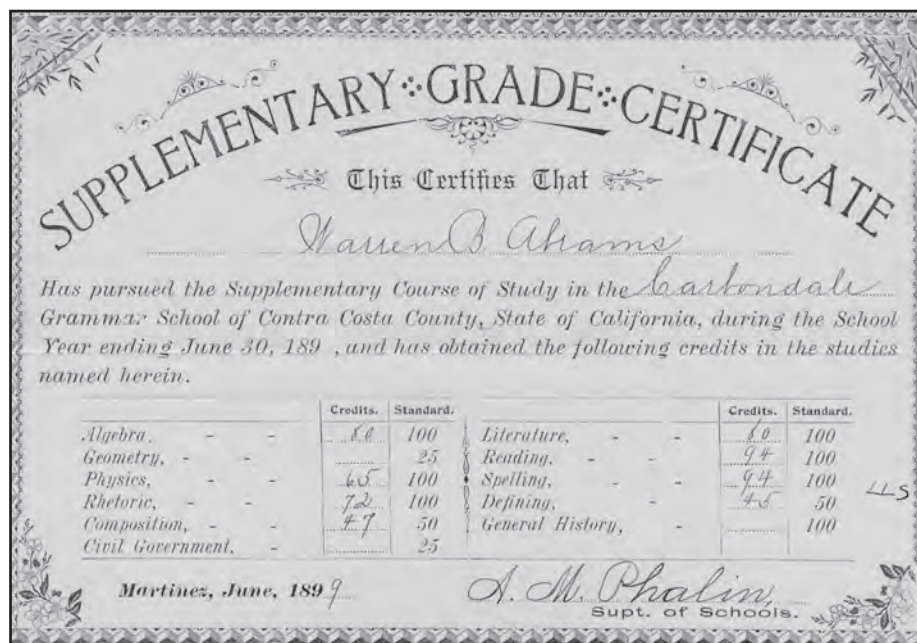
Warren Brewster Abrams (1883–1964) and William Abner Abrams (1885–1968) were the sons of Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams and John Abrams. Both attended school in the coal mining community of Nortonville before a school was established in the nearby community of New York Landing. See photographs on the following page. Their ranch and property were located directly south of the Buchanan Ranch. See map on page 101.



P610.109.32

Carbondale school class, circa 1895. Left to right, top row: George Cooper, Mrs. Brown (teacher), May Edwards, Nellie Vaughn, Warren Abrams. Left to right, second row: John Ginochio (with arms crossed), Lizzie Ginochio, Alice Lougher, Sarah Banchemo, Johnny Buffo. Seated left to right: Louis Ginochio and William "Will" Abrams.

Photographs Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society



P610.331.3

Warren B. Abrams, *Supplementary Grade Certificate*, June 1899. This certificate, from the Carbondale Grammar School, is signed by former Nortonville school principal and superintendant of schools, A. M. Phalin. Both Warren Abrams and his brother, William, attended school in Nortonville. They were the sons of John and Margaret Jane (Thomas) Abrams.





P610.102.1

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*

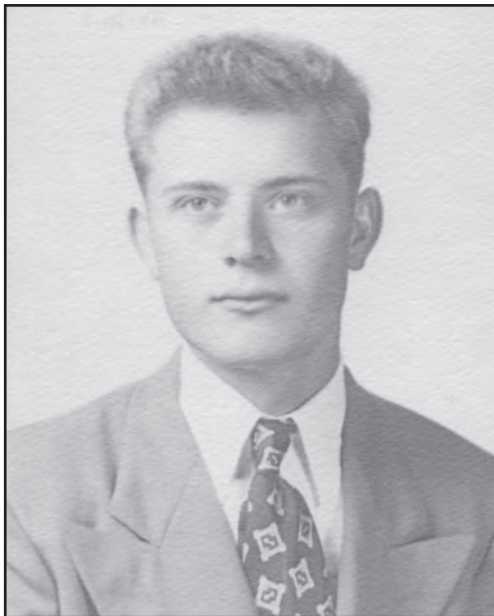


P610.242.4

Above, Leo “Ike” Latimer’s home on Nortonville Road. The structure was built in the 1860s and was located slightly north of Nortonville townsite. This was the house that Latimer was living in at the time of his death in 1986. Photograph by Kim Tanksley, September 1987.

Left, “Ike” at a Black Diamond Days event at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, circa 1980s. Photograph by Nancy McKay, EBRPD.

*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD*



P610.349.2

*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Tina and William Rees Thomas Collection*

This ranch house on Nortonville Road, just north of the former coal mining community of Nortonville, was owned by the Thomas family. The structure was built in 1861. Living at this ranch for many years were Gloria and Dolores Thomas, the sisters of rancher, Wayne Thomas (pictured left, no date). Photograph above by Traci Gibbons, October 2021.

According to the book, *Days Gone By in Contra Costa County, California*, Volume 3, by Nilda Rego, page 93, Rees and Margaret Thomas settled in Nortonville.

They homesteaded 160 acres and moved into a small one-story redwood house. A few years later, Reese [sic] and Margaret had the house moved across Kirker Creek north of Nortonville where Kirker Pass and Nortonville Road came together. The little house was joined to an existing two-story building.

According to everybody that's crawled underneath it, it's been at least two building put together. They say it was a stage station at one time.





P610.291.36

The Ginochio saloon and boardinghouse, Nortonville, California, *circa* 1890s. Posing for the photograph on the second story balcony are Angelina Ginochio and her daughter, Amelia. Standing in the doorway of the saloon, with the big beard, is Giovanni Ginochio. The other men standing beside him are unknown. The white horse and buggy (on the right) belonged to the local doctor, Worth Scott (W. S.) George. Perhaps one of the men standing next to Giovanni Ginochio is Dr. George. The man sitting in the sulky is Adolph Sophie who delivered newspapers to the Ginochio family.

*Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society*



P610.358.1

Louis J. "Bud" Ginocchio was born in 1918 and has been reported to be the last child born in Nortonville. Bud passed away in 2007 at the age of 88. He was the son of coal field residents, Margueritte "Doll" (Hunter) and Louis R. Ginocchio. "Doll" (1894–1972) and Louis R. (1889–1964) married on November 4, 1911. They had eight children.

According to Bud's obituary from the *Contra Costa Times*, April 17, 2007, "He left school at a young age to help his dad work on the ranch where they raised cattle and sheep. He was later joined by his three brothers and they formed the 5L's Ranch on Balfour Road in Brentwood, California, which later became the feedlot known as the Ginocchio Livestock Company." His obituary also stated that he was "a prominent cattleman well known in California and Nevada."

This photograph, by geologist Ray Sullivan, was taken from the ridge between the coal mining townsites of Somersville and Stewartville in 1998. The image looks west towards Somersville basin. Rose Hill Cemetery, slightly hidden by Bud's cowboy hat, can be seen in the distance.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Ray Sullivan Collection*





P610.469.30

*Courtesy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society*



P610.469.30 DETAIL

Pictured above is an undated view of the Ginochio ranch in Nortonville townsite. On the left is a partial enlargement of the above photograph. The road, on the right, leads out of the former mining town to Kirker Pass Road (towards Pittsburg to the north) as well as to Black Diamond Way (towards Clayton to the south). The Ginochio barn is seen on the left. In the right corner are the corrals. Across the road from the barn is the Ginochio boarding house and saloon and other out buildings. The Black Diamond Railroad bed can barely be seen behind the barn and corral.





P610.127.1

Above, the Lougher Ranch on Somersville Road in the 1920s. On the east side of Somersville Road stands the sheep barn (right), the current location of the Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve headquarters.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*



P610.242.5

Left, rancher and coal field descendant, Elmer "Jack" Lougher at the ridge between Nortonville and Somersville townsites, circa 1980s. Jack was the son of Leyshon and Lizzie (Ginochio) Lougher. For many years, he lived on the ranch pictured above. Photographer unknown.

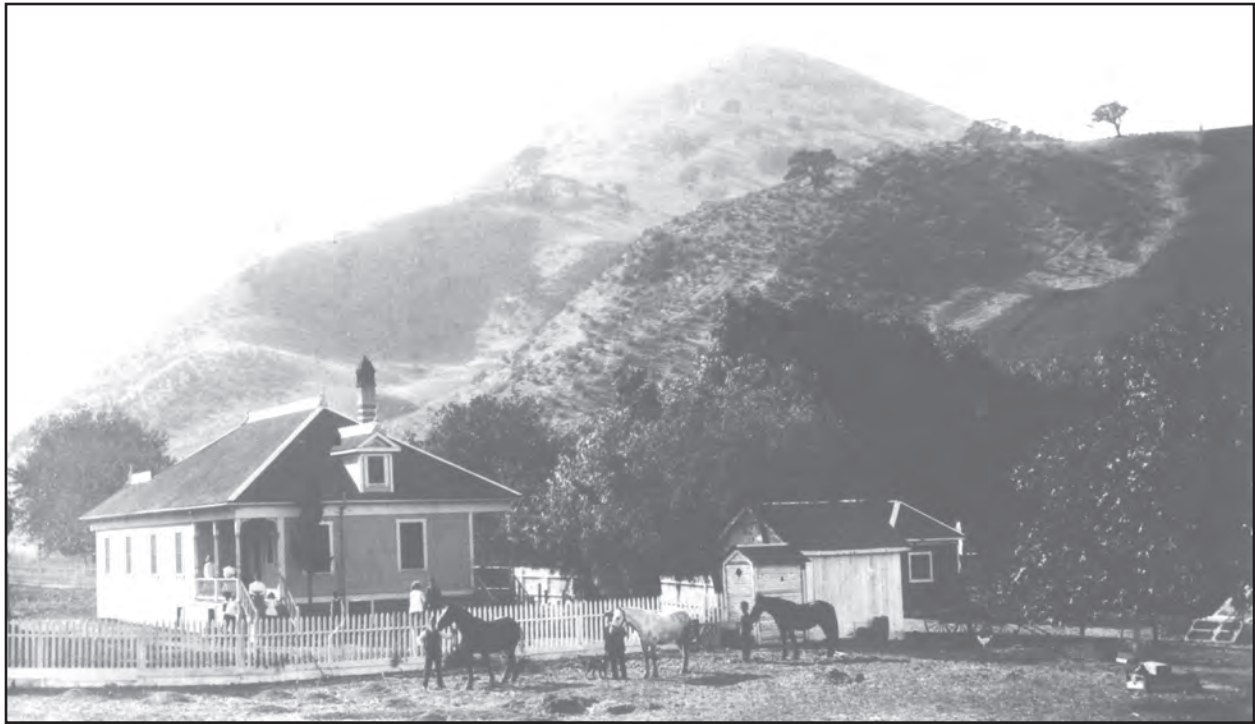
*Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve, EBRPD*



P610.29.28

The Lougher ranch, circa 1912. Leyshon and Lizzie Lougher purchased this land next to Somersville Road. The area is known as Sidney Flat. Lougher dismantled structures from the mining area and combined the material to construct his home and outbuildings.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Elmer "Jack" Lougher Collection*



P610.281.39

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Arata Family Collection*



P610.242.21

Above, the Arata Ranch on Somersville Road, *circa* 1916. Pictured are the ranch house and outbuildings of the Arata Ranch, located 1.5 miles north of the Somersville townsite. In 1904, Eugene Arata purchased the ranch from the estate of Isaac Laverty. Wood salvaged from the former Somersville School and/or church was used to construct buildings on the ranch, including the main house.

Left, Frank Arata participated in the oral history forum during the Black Diamond Days celebration held at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve on May 22, 1988. Photograph by Nancy McKay, EBRPD Public Affairs Department.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*





P610.126.1

The Arata Ranch, *circa* 1980, looking southeast towards Somersville Road. The three large structures visible, from top to bottom, are: the dairy barn, the Arata family home, and the horse barn. The small structure, to the left of the entrance road to the ranch, is the chicken house. The Arata family sold their ranch to Bob and Claudia 'Mike' Moller in 1981. Photographer unknown.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD*



P610.479.32

The old Buchanan ranch house before it was remodeled for Warren G. “Bud” and Ruth Buchanan to live in. No date. The image above shows the east side. Sitting on the steps are Jeanette “Jennie” (Buchanan) and James Syme, the sister and brother-in-law of W. J. Buchanan, who lived on the ranch prior to Warren G. and Ruth Buchanan. The image below shows the back entrance.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.30



P610.479.33

The old Buchanan ranch house before it was remodeled for Warren G. “Bud” and Ruth Buchanan to live in. No date. The image above shows the front. The image below shows the northeast corner.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.35





P610.479.40

Above, the remodeled ranch house facing north. No date. Below, the house, facing north, with vegetation planted around the home. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.39



P610.479.36

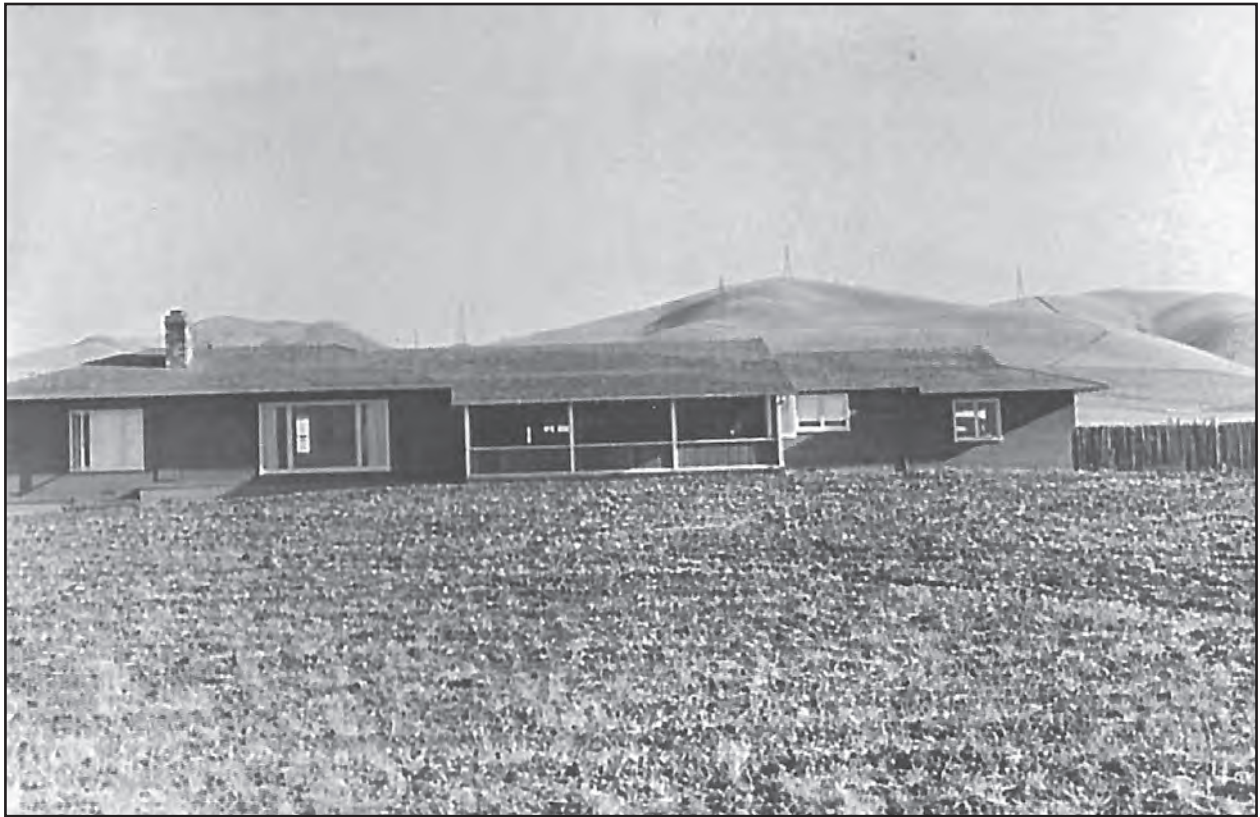
Above, the east and north facing sides of the remodeled ranch house. Below, the east facing side of the ranch house. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.37





P610.479.22

The new home built in 1946 for Warren G. “Bud” and Ruth Buchanan. No date. This home was built next to and on the west side of the existing home on the ranch.

In 1963, another home was built adjacent to, and west of the house pictured. The 1963 home was built for Warren G. “Bud” and Ruth Buchanan so that their son, William E. “Bill” Buchanan and his family could live in the 1946 home pictured above. Ruth Buchanan lived in the 1963 home until her passing in 2004 at the age of 104.

This photograph was taken looking south, towards the hills, where the Mount Diablo Coal Field mining communities of Somersville and Nortonville were located.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*





P610.479.24

W. J. Buchanan harvesting hay at the Buchanan Ranch. No date. Photograph above taken looking south. Photograph below taken looking southwest.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.25



P610.479.26

W. J. Buchanan harvesting hay at the Buchanan Ranch. No date. According to Laurie (Buchanan) Pease, the barn, seen in both images, was built in 1901.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.27



P610.479.28

These two images show harvested hay being placed in the Buchanan barn. No date. In the image above, William J. Buchanan poses in front of the hay wagon. Below, Ed Parent, brother-in-law of Ruth Buchanan, stands in the hay wagon. The man in the right corner is only identified as Frank C.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.23





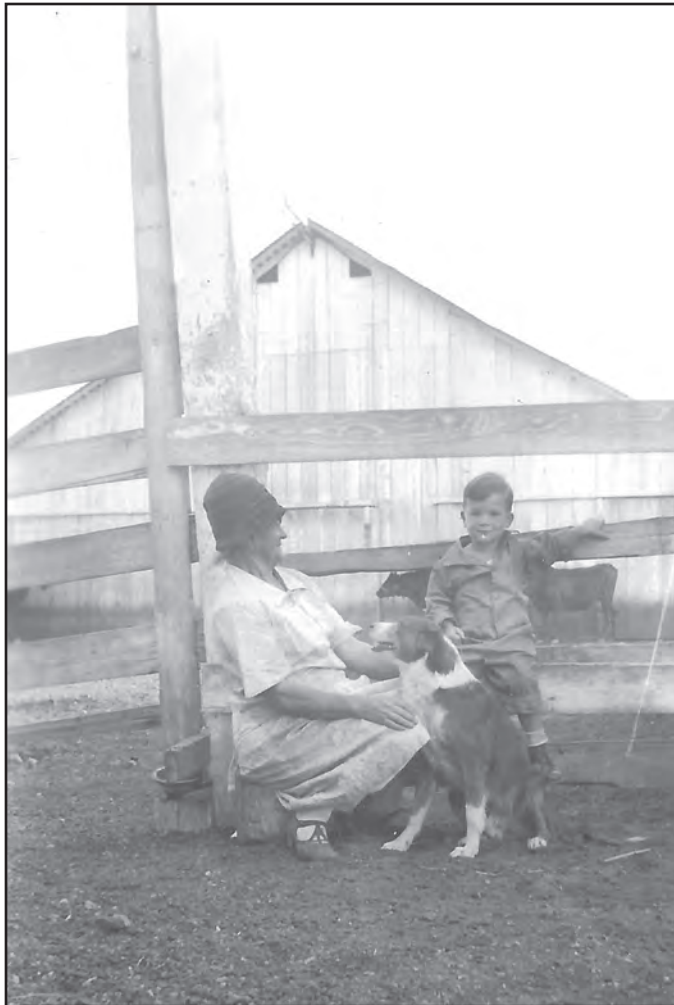
P610.429.43

Above, a young William E. "Bill" Buchanan, son of Warren G. and Ruth Buchanan, watching sheep next to the barn on the Buchanan ranch. Standing nearby is Jeanette "Jennie" (Buchanan) Syme, the sister of William J. Buchanan. No date. Below, young Bill sits on a horse next to the barn. Jennie Syme is partially hidden behind the horse. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.429.42



P610.479.45

Young William "Bill" Buchanan on the Buchanan Ranch with his grandfather's sister, Jeanette "Jennie" (Buchanan) Syme. No date. The ranch barn stands behind them.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

### Bill Buchanan Well Again After Illness

Friends of Mr. and Mrs. W. G. (Bud) Buchanan were glad to know that their son, William Buchanan III, is home again following a serious illness of several months in the Los Gatos sanitarium. He is completely recovered.

At present, young Bill is with his mother as guests of Buchanan's sister, Mrs. Howard Kelly, at Walnut Creek, until the family move to the James Syme ranch near Pittsburg.

The ranch, which is the original ranch home of the Buchanan family, being the home place of Bud Buchanan's grandfather, William Buchanan, has been extensively remodeled. Members of the Buchanan family have lived on the place continuously for 70 years.

The name of the newspaper and date of publication for the article above are unknown.

### Billy Buchanan Is Greatly Improved

Billy Buchanan, 9-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Buchanan of Pittsburg, who has been ill in a Los Gatos sanitarium for the past six weeks, is reported making definite and rapid recovery.

The young man contracted influenza pneumonia over two months ago. Bill is the grandson of Supervisor W. J. Buchanan.

From the *Antioch Ledger* newspaper, circa 1938.



P610.479.47

Pictured in both images is Ruth (Simpson) Buchanan with sheep on the Buchanan Ranch. No date. The top image is looking north, with Buchanan Road visible behind Ruth. The bottom photo, looking northeast, shows the renovated ranch house behind Ruth.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.46





P610.479.44

This image titled “Scrap for Victory Week,” was apparently used for a publication to help advertise the need for scrap metal during World War II. No date. The caption for the photograph states:

Pittsburg, Calif. – This old jalopy and worn out farm tools are typical of vital scrap iron found on farms and needed by the nation’s steel mills. Evelyn Haworth, volunteer worker for the Pittsburg “Scrap For Victory Week” campaign, March 30 to April 5, located this cache of scrap on the W. G. Buchanan farm near Pittsburg. It will be contributed to the Pittsburg community scrap pile.

Columbia Steel Company, operator of Pittsburg’s steel mill, will pay top ceiling prices for all scrap collected in the drive. It will be serviced at cost by California Scrap Iron Corporation, and money gained through the sale will be given to the local Red Cross, Boy Scouts and Pittsburg Boy’s Club. Similar campaigns are underway in the adjacent communities of Antioch and Brentwood.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.15

William J. and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan with their eight-year-old grandson, William E. "Bill" Buchanan. Photograph taken *circa* 1937.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.7



P610.479.6

Pictured are Nora (Carroll) Buchanan and William J. Buchanan. No date. The two were married in Martinez, Contra Costa County, California, on January 4, 1893.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*





P610.479.21

Three generations at the Buchanan Ranch, *circa* 1954. Pictured on the horse is William E. "Bill" Buchanan, holding his son, Doug. Standing beside them is Warren G. Buchanan, father of Bill Buchanan.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*



P610.479.51

William J. Buchanan was well known and greatly admired by those who knew him. The Mount Diablo Coal Field residents and their descendants spoke fondly of him and remembered the many things he did for them and the former coal mining area. He took action to protect Rose Hill Cemetery. In a 1941 *Oakland Tribune* newspaper article, it stated: "Supervisor W. J. Buchanan said he would take steps at once to fortify fences and repair the gate to the hillside burial ground where...heifers have corralled, toppling headstones and trampling graves." The article goes on to state that he had 30 trees planted around the cemetery.

He served as the master of ceremonies for the October 1934 dedication of the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West monument that was placed in Rose Hill Cemetery, honoring the pioneers of Nortonville and Somersville. He also served as master of ceremonies and/or chairman in charge for various pioneer picnics that were held.

William J. "Billy" Buchanan. No date.

*Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, EBRPD  
Buchanan Family Collection*

## BUCHANAN FAMILY TIMELINE

| DATE  | EVENT                                                                                                                                   | SOURCE                                                                                                        |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1826  | William Buchanan is born.                                                                                                               | Gravestone, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, East 18 <sup>th</sup> Street, Antioch, California                |
| 1833  | Catherine Campbell, future wife of William Buchanan is born.                                                                            | Gravestone, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, East 18 <sup>th</sup> Street, Antioch, California                |
| 1849  | Pittsburg is originally called New York of the Pacific (Contra Costa County, California).                                               | "Names changed through history," <i>Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, November 9, 1972                             |
| 1850s | William Buchanan arrives in America. He was born in Scotland and married Catherine (also born in Scotland) in Rochester, New York.<br>. | "The Buchanan family, Five generations in Pittsburg," <i>Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, February 28, 1983, p. 5 |
| 1863  | Jeanette Buchanan, daughter of William and Catherine Buchanan is born.                                                                  | Gravestone, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, East 18 <sup>th</sup> Street, Antioch, California                |
| 1866  | The Buchanan family moved to Contra Costa County from Forest Hills, Placer County, California.                                          | "Buchanan Began Career On Father's Grain Farm," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 6, 1950, p. 1  |



Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of  
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| DATE           | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                   | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1867           | James Syme, future husband of Jeanette Buchanan is born.                                                                                                                                | Gravestone, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, East 18 <sup>th</sup> Street, Antioch, California                                                                    |
| 1867, Sept. 11 | William James, "Billy," son of William and Catherine, is born at the family home at Second Street and Railroad Ave., New York Landing (now Pittsburg), Contra Costa County, California. | "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 103<br><br>"Store To Fete Fiftieth Year," <i>Pittsburg Post Dispatch</i> , Sept. 3, 1946, p. 1 |
| 1868           | The name New York of the Pacific changes to New York Landing (now Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California).                                                                          | "Names changed through history," <i>Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, November 9, 1972                                                                                 |
| 1868           | William and Catherine Buchanan and their son William J. "Billy" move to a ranch four miles to the southeast. William Buchanan engages in grain raising.                                 | "Buchanan Began Career On Father's Grain Farm," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 6, 1950, p. 3                                                      |
| 1870           | Nora Carroll, future wife of William J. Buchanan, is born.                                                                                                                              | Gravestone, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, East 18 <sup>th</sup> Street, Antioch, California                                                                    |
| 1880           | Nora Carroll, future wife of William J. Buchanan, arrives in New York Landing, Contra Costa County, California.                                                                         | "Mrs. Nora Buchanan Is Mourned," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, August 2, 1945, p. 1                                                                      |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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| DATE          | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1880          | The 1880 United States Federal Census for Nortonville Precinct, Contra Costa County, California, lists William Buchanan, age 54, as a farmer and native of Scotland. Also listed are his wife, Catherine, age 46, a native of Scotland and their two children Jenney [sic], age 17, a housekeeper and William, age 13, at school, both natives of California. | 1880 United States Federal Census, Nortonville Precinct, Contra Costa County, California                                                                         |
| 1889, Sept.   | "An accident occurred last week which might have resulted seriously. Mr. Buchanan was coming down the hill from the Nortonville side, when the horses became unmanageable and he was thrown from the wagon. He was taken to the residence of Mrs. F. Davis, where he was cared for."                                                                          | "Somerville Items," Antioch Ledger newspaper, September 7, 1889                                                                                                  |
| 1893, Jan. 4  | William James Buchanan, son of William and Catherine Buchanan of Black Diamond, marries Nora Carroll of Concord, in St. Catherine's parish house, Martinez, Contra Costa County, California.                                                                                                                                                                  | "Married," Contra Costa Gazette newspaper, January 7, 1893, p. 2 and "Buchanan Began Career On Father's Grain Farm," Contra Costa Gazette, October 6, 1950, p. 3 |
| 1894, Dec. 28 | William Carroll Buchanan, infant son of William and Nora Buchanan, aged 2 months and 16 days, dies in Black Diamond, Contra Costa County, California. He is interred in the family plot in the Antioch Masonic and Odd Fellows Cemetery (now called Oak View Memorial Park), Contra Costa County, California.                                                 | "Died," Contra Costa Gazette newspaper, Saturday, January 12, 1895, p. 2                                                                                         |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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| DATE           | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                         | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1895           | The name New York Landing changes to Black Diamond (now Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California).                                                                          | "Names changed through history," <i>Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, November 9, 1972                                                                                                                       |
| 1896, Sept. 2  | William J. and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan purchase a general store at First and York Streets, Black Diamond, Contra Costa County, California. William calls it the "Cash Store." | "Store To Fete Fiftieth Year," <i>Pittsburg Post-Dispatch</i> newspaper, September 3, 1946, p. 1                                                                                                        |
| 1897, Aug. 5   | Nora Buchanan is appointed Postmistress for the Black Diamond Post Office.                                                                                                    | "Chronology of Post Offices" located at the Pittsburg Library, 80 Power Ave., Pittsburg, California                                                                                                     |
| 1898, May 10   | Warren G. Buchanan, son of William J. and Nora Buchanan is born in Black Diamond, Contra Costa County, California and was raised at Second Street and Railroad Avenue there.  | "Four Generations, Buchanans-Pittsburg tradition," <i>Press</i> newspaper, March 14, 1973 and "Heart Attack Claims Local Ex-Supervisor," <i>Pittsburg Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, March 30, 1970, p. 1 |
| 1899, April 13 | Ruth Lorraine Simpson, future wife of Warren G. Buchanan, is born in Crockett, Contra Costa County, California.                                                               | "Born," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, April 22, 1899, page 4                                                                                                                                   |



Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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| DATE          | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                             | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1900          | William J. Buchanan runs for Supervisor of District 4 and obtains 147 votes. P. Demartini defeats him with 161 votes.                                                                             | "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 104 and "Official Report: Vote of Contra Costa County 1900," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, November 17, 1900, p. 2 |
| 1900, Oct. 28 | Norine, daughter of William J. and Nora Buchanan and sister to Warren Buchanan, is born in Black Diamond, Contra Costa County, California.                                                        | "Born," <i>Antioch Ledger</i> newspaper, Nov. 3, 1900, p. 2                                                                                                                                    |
| 1901, Nov.    | "The W. J. Buchanan's of Black Diamond will play the Somersville baseball nine a match game of ball" at Somersville. "The Buchanans have won two out of three games played to date."              | "From Somersville," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, November 2, 1901, p. 2                                                                                                              |
| 1902          | "W. J. Buchanan, who purchased the Black Diamond hotel property, will remodel the building...and then remove with the postoffice [sic] and his grocery store into it."                            | <i>Antioch Ledger</i> , February 22, 1902, p. 5                                                                                                                                                |
| 1903          | W. J. Buchanan ran for the first board of trustees and was elected chairman (comparable to today's mayor) for the newly incorporated community of Black Diamond, Contra Costa County, California. | "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 106                                                                                                                         |
| 1904, Jan. 1  | The Contra Costa County Bank, which organized in 1903, began business in Pittsburg (called Black Diamond at the time). W. J. Buchanan serves as vice-president.                                   | <i>History of Contra Costa County, California</i> , Mae Fisher Purcell, The Gillick Press, Berkeley, California, December 1940, p. 584                                                         |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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| DATE           | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1904, March 15 | William Buchanan, father of William James Buchanan, passes away and is interred in the Antioch Masonic and Odd Fellows Cemetery (now called Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery), Antioch, Contra Costa County, California. | "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 107 and cemetery records, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, Antioch, Contra Costa County, California                                                                |
| 1904, Nov.     | William J. Buchanan runs for County Supervisor and is elected.                                                                                                                                                          | "Four Generations, Buchanans-Pittsburg tradition," <i>Press</i> newspaper, March 14, 1973, and <i>History of Contra Costa County, California</i> , Mae Fisher Purcell, The Gillick Press, Berkeley, California, December 1940, p. 280 |
| 1905, Jan. 1   | William J. Buchanan begins his career as Contra Costa County Supervisor.                                                                                                                                                | "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 104                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1906           | William J. and Nora Buchanan move their store business to First and Black Diamond Streets, Black Diamond, Contra Costa County, California.                                                                              | "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 108                                                                                                                                                                |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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| DATE          | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1909          | Ruth L. Simpson, future wife of Warren “Bud” Buchanan, and her family move to Berkeley, Alameda County, California. Ruth attends high school there.                                                                                                                                                                   | “Family ties, and a daily drink, have kept centenarian going,” <i>Ledger Dispatch</i> newspaper, April 13, 1999, p. 1                                                                     |
| 1910, Jan. 14 | Catherine (Campbell) Buchanan, wife of William Buchanan and mother to William James Buchanan and Jeanette “Jennie” Buchanan, passes away at age 75 years and 6 months. She is interred at the Antioch Masonic and Odd Fellows Cemetery (now called Oak View Memorial Park), Antioch, Contra Costa County, California. | Cemetery records, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, Antioch, Contra Costa County, California and “Another Pioneer Passes Away,” <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, Jan. 22, 1910, p. 7 |
| 1911          | The community of Black Diamond changed its name to Pittsburg.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | “Pittsburg Will Soon Be Postoffice Name,” <i>Daily Gazette</i> , June 17, 1911, p. 3 and “Names changed through history,” <i>Post Dispatch</i> , November 9, 1972                         |
| 1918          | Warren “Bud” Buchanan enlists in the Army during World War I.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | “Warren Buchanan Enlists,” <i>Pittsburg Post</i> newspaper, July 30, 1918, p. 1                                                                                                           |



Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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| DATE         | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1919         | Ruth L. Simpson arrives in Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California, to teach school.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <i>Interview with Ruth (Simpson) Buchanan Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg), Contra Costa County, California, p. 1</i> |
| 1922         | The Buchanan's built a new store at Fifth Street and Railroad Avenue, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California. The store remained at this location for 26 years.                                                                                                                                           | "Four Generations, Buchanans-Pittsburg tradition," <i>Press</i> newspaper, March 14, 1973 and "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 108               |
| 1922, Aug. 2 | Ruth Lorraine Simpson marries Warren "Bud" G. Buchanan, son of William James and Nora (Carroll) Buchanan.                                                                                                                                                                                                     | "Warren Buchanan Married," <i>Pittsburg Post</i> newspaper, Aug. 5, 1922, p. 1                                                                                                     |
| 1929, Jan. 7 | William Edwin Buchanan, son of Warren "Bud" and Ruth Buchanan, is born in the Alta Bates sanitarium in Berkeley, Alameda County, California.                                                                                                                                                                  | "Jan. 7 Memorable Day for Buchanan," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, January 7, 1929, p. 1                                                                                  |
| 1929, Jan. 7 | William James Buchanan begins his 25 <sup>th</sup> year of continuous service as a Contra Costa County Supervisor. He is elected chairman of the board for the seventh time. Additionally, he obtained his first raise in official salary since he began his service on the board, receiving \$200 per month. | "Jan. 7 Memorable Day for Buchanan," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, January 7, 1929, p. 1                                                                                  |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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| DATE          | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | SOURCE                                                                                                                |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1930, Aug. 19 | William J. Buchanan serves as a pall bearer for George McMullin, a former Mount Diablo Coal Field resident, who died at age 82.                                                                                                                                                                                                               | "Geo. M'Mullen Called by Death," <i>Pittsburg Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, Aug. 18, 1930, p. 1                        |
| 1934, Oct. 7  | William Buchanan, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, serves as master of ceremonies at the dedication of the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West monument in Somersville (now called Rose Hill) Cemetery. The monument was inscribed to the memory of the pioneers of Somersville and Nortonville.                         | "Shaft Erected To Honor Coal Town Pioneers," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 8, 1934, p. 8             |
| 1935          | William J. Buchanan serves as master of ceremonies for the Pioneer Picnic at Pittsburg Park. The Pioneers include "old timers" who formerly lived in Somersville, Nortonville, Antioch, and Pittsburg.                                                                                                                                        | "Pioneers of District Will Picnic Sunday," <i>Antioch Ledger</i> newspaper, May 31, 1935, p. 1                        |
| 1935, Aug.    | W. J. Buchanan was noted to be the "watchdog of the county's treasury."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | "Four Generations, Buchanans-Pittsburg tradition," <i>Press</i> newspaper, March 14, 1973, p. 12                      |
| 1938          | Warren "Bud" and Ruth Buchanan move into a 160-acre ranch in Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California. The site, on Buchanan Road, is the homestead that William Buchanan, grandfather of Warren, founded in 1866. Buchanan's Aunt Jeanette "Jennie" Syme and her husband, James Syme, had lived there prior. The Symes moved to Pittsburg. | "Family ties, and a daily drink, have kept centenarian going," <i>Ledger Dispatch</i> newspaper, April 13, 1999, p. 2 |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of  
Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg)  
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February 15, 2004

| DATE         | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | SOURCE                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1939, June 4 | The "Old Timers" of Nortonville and Somersville gather at 12:30 in the municipal park in Pittsburg for their annual picnic and program. Supervisor W. J. Buchanan serves as chairman of the event.                                                                                                         | "Old Timers To Picnic In Park," <i>Pittsburg (Daily Independent)</i> newspaper, May 30, 1939, p. 1                                     |
| 1940         | William J. Buchanan enters his 36 <sup>th</sup> year of service with the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.                                                                                                                                                                                         | <i>History of Contra Costa County, California</i> , Mae Fisher Purcell, The Gillick Press, Berkeley, California, December 1940, p. 283 |
| 1941, circa  | Supervisor W. J. Buchanan had 30 trees planted around Rose Hill Cemetery.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | "Old Cemetery To Be Protected," <i>Oakland Tribune</i> newspaper, June 3, 1941, p. 20                                                  |
| 1941         | Buchanan Field is purchased by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors for use as an airport. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, the airport was taken over by the Army as a training station for pilots.                                                                                                | "Plane Owners, Pilots To Breakfast At Buchanan," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, August 1, 1946, p. 8                           |
| 1942, June 8 | James Syme, brother-in-law of Supervisor William J. Buchanan, passes away at age 75 in an Antioch hospital, after undergoing a major operation on June 1. He is interred in the Buchanan family plot, Antioch Masonic and Odd Fellows Cemetery (now Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery), Antioch, California. | "Buchanan's Brother-In-Law Succumbs," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, June 8, 1942, p. 1                                        |



Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of  
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February 15, 2004

| DATE         | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1942, Dec. 1 | While developing plans for the establishment of the Buchanan Field, the Army took over the project, eventually returning it to the county in 1946.                                                                                                                       | "Future Development of Field Seen By Chairman," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, August 3, 1946, p. 1.                                            |
| 1943, Jan. 3 | Three hundred attend the 50 <sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary celebration for W. J. and Nora Buchanan. "Scores of friends gathered yesterday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Buchanan in Pittsburg to felicitate the couple on their golden wedding anniversary." | "Buchanans Fete Golden Wedding," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> , Jan. 4, 1943, p. 5                                                                       |
| 1945, Jan. 4 | Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Buchanan observe their fifty-second wedding anniversary. "The event will be marked quietly by the pioneer couple, both of whom have spent a lifetime in Pittsburg."                                                                                   | "Celebrate 52 <sup>nd</sup> Anniversary," <i>Pittsburg Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, January 3, 1945, p. 6                                               |
| 1945, Aug. 2 | Nora (Carroll) Buchanan, wife of William James Buchanan, passes away at the age of 74 years. She is interred in the family plot at the Masonic and Odd Fellow cemetery (now called Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery) in Antioch, Contra Costa County, California.         | "Mrs. Nora Buchanan Is Mourned," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> , Aug. 2, 1945, p. 1 and "Nora Buchanan," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> , Aug. 3, 1945, p. 8 |
| 1945, Aug. 4 | Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. at the Pittsburg Funeral Chapel for Mrs. Nora Buchanan, wife of William J. Buchanan. Rev. E. W. Bennett, of Pittsburg Community Church, conducted the services.                                                                     | "Obituaries," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, August 6, 1945, p. 8                                                                               |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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February 15, 2004

| DATE         | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1946         | Warren G. "Bud" and Ruth Buchanan build a new home to live in adjacent to, and west of, the existing home on the ranch.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | "Celebrating A Century," Ruth Buchanan's 100th Birthday Celebration, April 11, 1999                                                                                                                                                            |
| 1946, May 13 | Buchanan Field is returned to Contra Costa County. The Army had taken over the airport project on December 1, 1942.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | "Future Development of Field Seen By Chairman," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, August 3, 1946, p. 1                                                                                                                                    |
| 1946, Aug. 4 | Dedication of Buchanan Field. The airfield is named after Supervisor William J. Buchanan.<br><br>William J. Buchanan receives a plaque, produced by the Columbia Steel Company, from the hands of his 17-year-old grandson, William E. "Billy" Buchanan. The bronze plaque will be placed in a permanent position as a marker for Buchanan Field. | "Future Development of Field Seen By Chairman," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, August 3, 1946, p. 1<br><br>"Famous Stunt Flier To Perform At Dedication of Buchanan Field," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> , Friday, August 2, 1946, p. 1 |
| 1949         | William J. "Bill" Buchanan is re-elected as chairman of the Board of Supervisors for Contra Costa County. He has served as Supervisor for 46 years.                                                                                                                                                                                               | "A Man Called Billy," <i>Days Gone By</i> , Vol. 1, Nilda Rego, p. 110                                                                                                                                                                         |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of  
Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg)  
Contra Costa County, California

February 15, 2004

| DATE           | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1949, Feb.     | Buchanan's Department Store in Pittsburg is sold. The building becomes Klein's Department Store.<br><br>W. J. Buchanan stated that he will close the department store and devote his full-time duties to his position as chairman of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. The announcement was made by his son, Warren "Bud" Buchanan, who stated that the store will be leased by local merchant, Hugh Klein. | "Buchanan To Retire From Business After 50 Years," <i>Oakland Tribune</i> , Feb. 10, 1949, p. D 19 and "Four Generations, Buchanans-Pittsburg tradition," <i>Press</i> newspaper, March 14, 1973 |
| 1950, Sept. 28 | William J. Buchanan is in a Pittsburg hospital, resting comfortably after a heart attack late in the day. He was returning from a meeting with the supervisors in Pleasant Hill when the attack occurred. A widower, he lives at 547 East Twelfth Street, Pittsburg, with his daughter, Mrs. Norine Kelley.                                                                                                             | "Veteran Board Chairman Suffers Heart Attack; Condition Satisfactory," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, Sept. 30, 1950, p. 1                                                               |
| 1950, Oct. 1   | Jeanette Syme, wife of the late James Syme and sister to William J. Buchanan, passes away at a Concord, Contra Costa County, rest home. A resident of the Pittsburg area for 83 years, she died at the age of 87. She is interred at the family plot in the Masonic and Odd Fellows Cemetery (now called Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery), Antioch, Contra Costa County, California.                                    | "Mrs. Janet [sic] Syme, Buchanan Sister, Dies At Concord," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 2, 1950, p. 1                                                                          |
| 1950, Oct. 4   | The condition of William J. Buchanan is termed "critical" by Pittsburg Community Hospital attendants.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | "Buchanan's Condition Critical," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 4, 1950, p. 1                                                                                                    |

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Contra Costa County, California

February 15, 2004

| DATE          | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1950, Oct. 6  | William J. Buchanan passes away in his sleep at 5:15 a.m. at the age of 83.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | "Veteran Board Chairman Passes Away At 5:15 A. M. After Illness Of One Week," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 6, 1950, p. 1              |
| 1950, Oct. 9  | The Rev. Benedict conducts services at 2 p.m. for William James Buchanan at the Pittsburg Community Church. Over 1,200 people attend the service and only 375 could make it into the church. Masonic services followed under the direction of the acting master of the Pittsburg Lodge No. 429. A funeral procession of over a mile in length was police escorted to Oak View Cemetery where Mr. Buchanan was interred in the family plot. | "Hundreds Troop Past Bier At Buchanan Rites," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 10, 1950, pp. 1 and 4                                      |
| 1950, Nov. 16 | Governor Earl Warren appoints Warren "Bud" Buchanan, son of William James Buchanan, to the Board of Supervisors for Contra Costa County.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | "Warren Buchanan Rites Tomorrow," <i>Oakland Tribune</i> , March 30, 1970, p. 5 and the <i>Pittsburg Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, March 10, 1970, p. 10 |
| 1952          | William E. Buchanan, son of Warren "Bud" and Ruth Buchanan, marries Joann Killeen.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | "Four Generations, Buchanans-Pittsburg tradition," <i>Press</i> newspaper, March 14, 1973, p. 12                                                        |



Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
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Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg)  
Contra Costa County, California

February 15, 2004

| DATE           | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | SOURCE                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1952, Oct.     | "The term of anyone appointed to succeed the late William J. Buchanan as fourth district supervisor would be until the November 1952 general election...Most popularly rumored selection of Governor Earl Warren for the vacant supervisor post, is Warren G. (Bud) Buchanan, son of the late supervisor." | "Appointment to Buchanan Post Good 'Till 1952," <i>Contra Costa Gazette</i> newspaper, October 12, 1950, p. 1                                  |
| 1959, Nov.     | Warren "Bud" Buchanan is defeated as Supervisor in the election by Edmund Linscheid.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | "Warren Buchanan Rites Tomorrow," <i>Oakland Tribune</i> , March 30, 1970, p. 5                                                                |
| 1960, Jan. 3   | Warren "Bud" Buchanan retires as Contra Costa County Supervisor.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | "Warren Buchanan Rites Tomorrow," <i>Oakland Tribune</i> , March 30, 1970, p. 5                                                                |
| 1963           | Warren G. "Bud" and Ruth Buchanan build a new home to live in adjacent to, and west of, the existing 1946 home. Their son and daughter-in-law, William "Bill" and Joan Buchanan and family live in the 1946 home.                                                                                          | "Celebrating A Century," Ruth Buchanan's 100th Birthday Celebration, April 11, 1999                                                            |
| 1970, March 28 | Warren G. "Bud" Buchanan passes away at a Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California, hospital following a heart attack. He is 71. He is interred in the family plot at the Oak View Cemetery, Contra Costa County, California.                                                                            | "Obituaries," <i>Contra Costa Times</i> newspaper, March 31, 1970, p. 2 A and gravestone, Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, Antioch, California |
| 1983, March 26 | William E. "Bill" Buchanan, grandson of the late W. J. Buchanan, shares memories of his grandfather at a luncheon meeting of the Contra Costa County Historical Society.                                                                                                                                   | "The Buchanan family, Five generations in Pittsburg," <i>Post Dispatch</i> newspaper, February 28, 1983, p. 5                                  |

Interview with Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan  
Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of  
Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg)  
Contra Costa County, California

February 15, 2004

| DATE           | EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | SOURCE                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1996, June 24  | William E. "Bill" Buchanan, son of Warren "Bud" and Ruth Buchanan passes away at Delta Memorial Hospital in Antioch, Contra Costa County, California, at the age of 67. He is interred in the family plot in Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, Antioch, California.                                                  | "Local Deaths," <i>Contra Costa Times</i> newspaper, June 27, 1996, p. 9 D                                                                                                   |
| 1999, April 13 | Ruth Buchanan celebrates her 100 <sup>th</sup> birthday at Zandonella's restaurant in Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California, with a gathering of more than 90 people.                                                                                                                                          | "Family ties, and a daily drink, have kept centenarian going," <i>Ledger Dispatch</i> newspaper, April 13, 1999, p. 1                                                        |
| 2004, Feb. 15  | Ruth Buchanan, age 104, is interviewed at her home on Buchanan Road, Pittsburg, by Traci Gibbons, Supervising Naturalist, Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, East Bay Regional Park District. She is interviewed regarding the history of the Buchanan family of Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg). | <i>Interview with Ruth (Simpson) Buchanan Regarding the History of the Buchanan Family of Nortonville and Black Diamond (now Pittsburg), Contra Costa County, California</i> |
| 2004, Dec. 9   | Ruth Lorraine (Simpson) Buchanan passes away at age 105. She is interred in the family plot in Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, Antioch, California.                                                                                                                                                                | <i>In Remembrance Card and gravestone at Oak View Memorial Park Cemetery, Antioch, California</i>                                                                            |
| 2004, Dec. 18  | A Celebration of Resurrection in memory of Ruth Lorraine Buchanan is held at The Community Presbyterian Church, 200 East Leland Road, Pittsburg, California.                                                                                                                                                        | Church program for A Celebration of the Resurrection in memory of Ruth Lorraine Buchanan                                                                                     |

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